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KILLER SUB



TOP

**SOCCER STAR
BOBBY
CHARLTON...**



writes a "top" football story about



**...that top
football
character—
"ROY of the
ROVERS"...**

every week in

TIGER

Tuesdays—4½d.

★ *All boys vote—"IT'S **TOPS!**"*

KILLER SUB

DECEMBER 1ST, 1941, BRITAIN STOOD ALONE, DEFENDING THE FREEDOM OF THE WORLD AGAINST THE ARMED MIGHT OF NAZI GERMANY AND FASCIST ITALY.

THEN, ON DECEMBER 7TH., JAPAN SUDDENLY ERUPTED INTO ACTION ~ AND WITHOUT WARNING, HER NAVAL AND AIR FORCES LAUNCHED TREACHEROUS ATTACKS AGAINST BRITISH AND AMERICAN BASES IN THE PACIFIC!

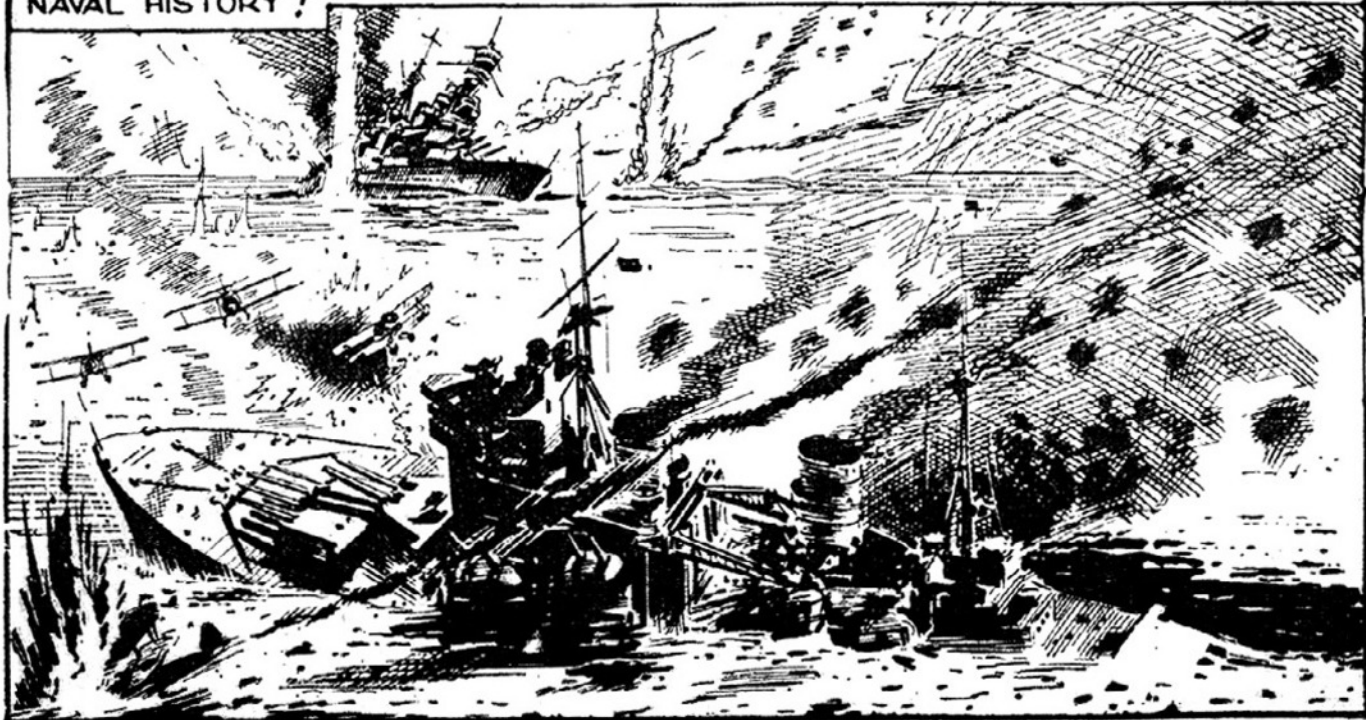
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THE FIRST RAID WAS ON PEARL HARBOUR, THE U.S.A.'S MAIN BASE IN HAWAII ~ AND EIGHTY-SIX AMERICAN WARSHIPS WERE SUNK OR BADLY DAMAGED!

Chapter 1. LONE MISSION

THREE DAYS LATER, BRITAIN SUFFERED DISASTER WHEN THE NEW BATTLESHIP *PRINCE OF WALES* AND THE BATTLE CRUISER *REPULSE* WERE ATTACKED BY A JAPANESE AIR FLEET...AND SUNK AFTER BOMBING UNPARALLELED IN NAVAL HISTORY!



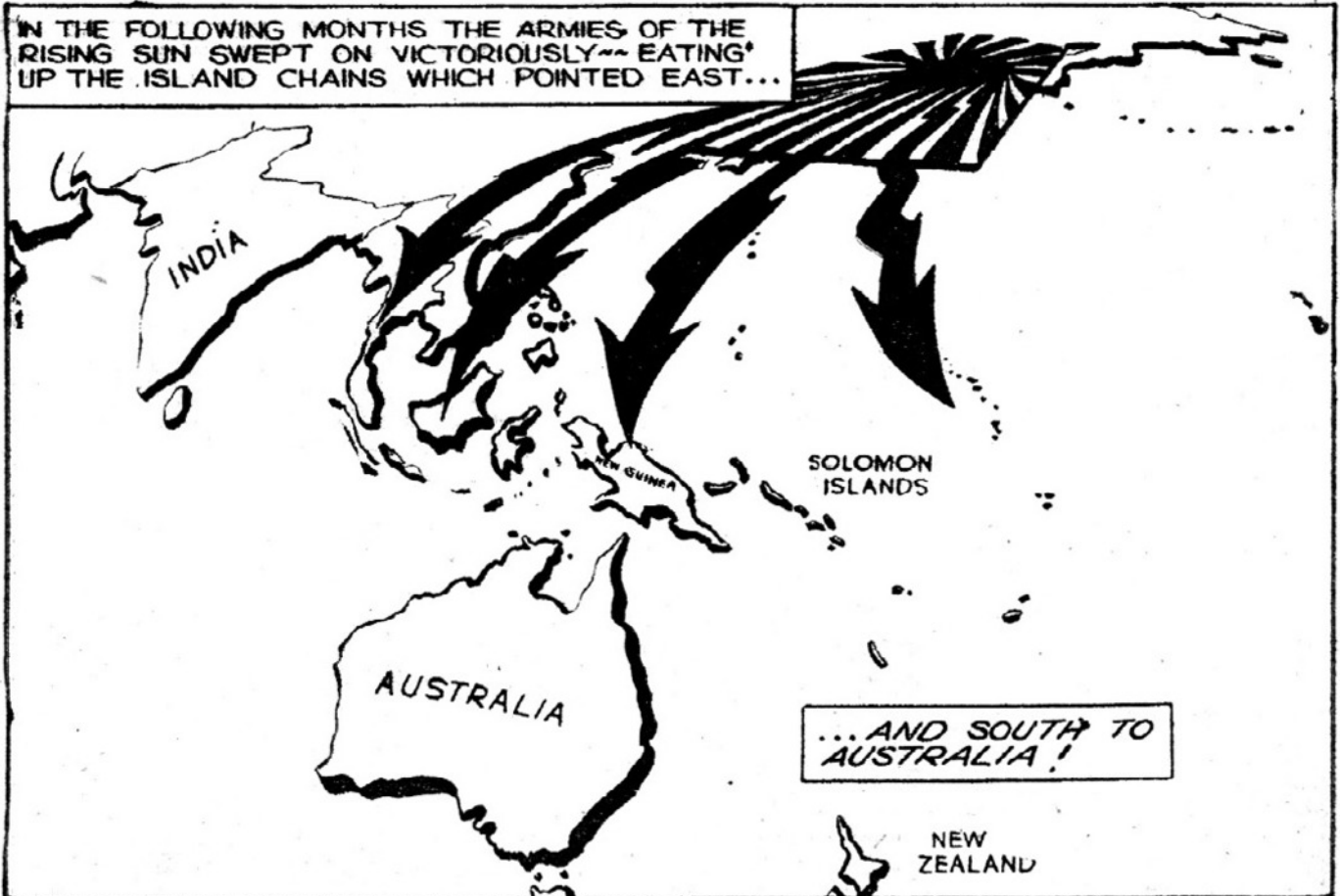
LIKE THE WRITHING TENTACLES OF AN OCTOPUS, JAPANESE LAND FORCES THRUST OUT THROUGH THE PACIFIC, WEAKLY DEFENDED, THE ISLANDS FELL ONE AFTER ANOTHER...



FIGHT TO THE
LAST MAN-- WE'LL
MAKE THE JAPS
PAY DEARLY...
AAAAGH!

Killer Sub

IN THE FOLLOWING MONTHS THE ARMIES OF THE RISING SUN SWEEP ON VICTORIOUSLY-- EATING UP THE ISLAND CHAINS WHICH POINTED EAST...



AT THE COMBINED BRITISH HEADQUARTERS IN SYDNEY, THE GROWING JAPANESE THREAT WAS DISCUSSED VERY GRAVELY...



Killer Sub

FROM THE TABLE, A WORRIED-LOOKING BRIGADIER SPOKE GRUFFLY ...



THE ARMY IS MAKING EVERY PREPARATION FOR THE DEFENCE OF THE CONTINENT ~ BUT THIS ARMADA SHOULD BE DESTROYED NOW, BEFORE IT EVEN SAILS! THAT'S A JOB FOR THE NAVY AND THE R.A.F.!



FOR A MOMENT THERE WAS SILENCE ~ THEN A SUNTANNED NAVAL COMMANDER STOOD UP AND SWEEPED THE CONFERENCE WITH NARROWED EYES ...

COMMANDER NORCOTT OF NAVAL INTELLIGENCE.

WE ARE TRAGICALLY SHORT OF SHIPS, SIR...AND A FULL SCALE SURFACE ATTACK ON YOSHIKANA WOULD REQUIRE WITHDRAWING EVERY SHIP WE'VE GOT FROM OTHER DUTIES. UTTERLY IMPOSSIBLE, OF COURSE!



A MUTTER OF DESPAIR RIPPLED THE LENGTH OF THE TABLE ~ THEN NORCOTT WENT ON ...



BUT, GENTLEMEN, THERE MAY BE ANOTHER ANSWER! ONE SHIP COULD DO AS MUCH DAMAGE AS A BATTLE FLEET ~ IF THAT SHIP WERE A SUBMARINE ATTACKING THE JAPANESE INSIDE THE HARBOUR! IF IT FAILS, THEN WE WILL BE FORCED TO ATTACK WITH EVERY SURFACE CRAFT WE HAVE!

EVERY MAN THERE KNEW THAT NORCOTT HAD SPOKEN THE SIMPLE TRUTH...AND THERE WAS NO OTHER CHOICE...THE PLAN HAD BEEN ACCEPTED!



THEN WE ARE AGREED -- NORCOTT'S PLAN MUST GO AHEAD WITH TOP PRIORITY. IF IT DOES NOT SUCCEED, GENTLEMEN, THEN JAPAN WILL BECOME MASTER OF THE PACIFIC!

WITHIN TWENTY MINUTES OF THE CONFERENCE ENDING, COMMANDER NORCOTT WAS BACK IN HIS OFFICE ... AND WITH HIM WAS A YOUNG LIEUTENANT OF THE NAVAL INTELLIGENCE DEPARTMENT ...



TONY -- YOU HAD QUITE A SPELL IN SUBS BEFORE YOU JOINED MY CREW, DIDN'T YOU?

YES, SIR -- TWO YEARS IN SWORDFISH AND A YEAR IN HAMMER -- IN FACT, I WAS DUE FOR COMMAND WHEN THE ADMIRALTY POSTED ME TO YOU!

LIEUTENANT TONY MAYNARD, R.N., HAD BEEN ON NORCOTT'S STAFF FOR ALMOST SIX MONTHS...



SEE STRIKER OUT THERE TIED UP TO THE DEPOT SHIP? WELL, WE'RE SENDING HER OUT ON A TOP MISSION... AND YOU'RE GOING WITH HER!

YOU MEAN AS AN OBSERVER FOR THE INTELLIGENCE DEPARTMENT, SIR? SOUNDS GREAT TO ME, GETTING BACK TO SEA AGAIN!

Killer Sub

BRIEFLY THE COMMANDER EXPLAINED THE OBJECTIVE OF THE SUBMARINE *H.M.S. STRIKER* ...

...AND YOU WILL MEMORISE EVERY CURRENT, MINEFIELD AND OBSTACLE INTO YOSHIKANA FROM OUR CHARTS! THEN IT'S YOUR JOB TO GET *STRIKER* IN UNDETECTED! YOU SAIL IN FORTY-EIGHT HOURS!

DOESN'T LEAVE ME MUCH TIME, DOES IT, SIR? LET'S GET STARTED ON PLANNING THE DETAILS!

FOR TWO DAYS AND NIGHTS TONY STUDIED COUNTLESS CHARTS AND EVERY SCRAP OF INFORMATION ON THE DEFENCES OF YOSHIKANA. THEN, AT LAST ...

STRIKER'S CAPTAIN, PHILIP RAYNOR, ONLY KNOWS HE'S OFF ON A LONG PATROL WITH YOU AS OBSERVER.

AND HE'S GOT HIS PATROL COURSE -- BUT WHEN WE REACH POSITION 'X' I GIVE HIM THESE SEALED ORDERS! RIGHT, SIR!

WE'RE DEPENDING ON YOU, TONY -- AND GOOD LUCK!

FROM THE CONNING TOWER OF *STRIKER*,
LIEUTENANT-COMMANDER PHILIP RAYNOR WATCHED
TONY'S LAUNCH APPROACHING ACROSS THE HARBOUR...



HERE COMES OUR
PASSENGER, NUMBER ONE --
SOME DESK JOB WALLAH
WHO WON'T KNOW A JAP
FRIGATE FROM THE GOSPORT
FERRY! STAND BY TO
TAKE HIM ABOARD!

AYE AYE,
SIR!

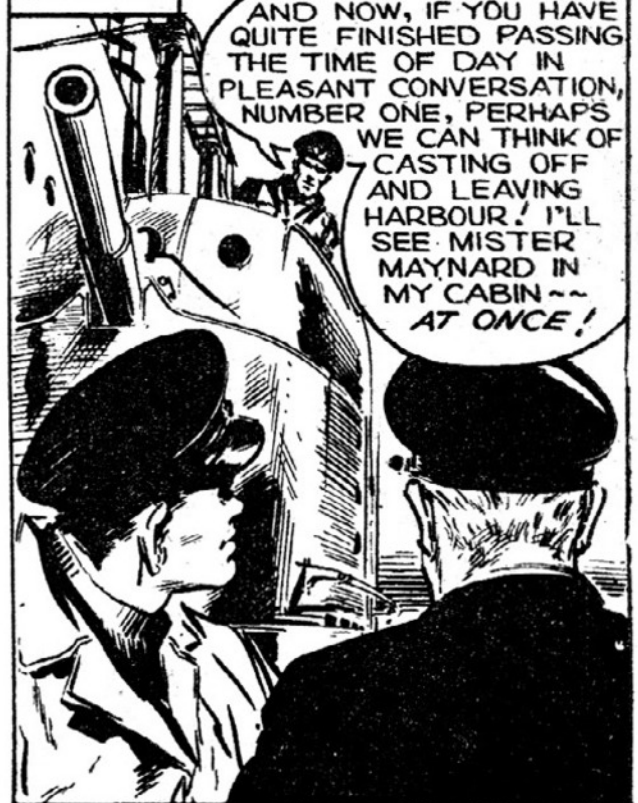
WHEN THE LAUNCH CAME ALONGSIDE
SECONDS LATER, JACK BRICE, THE
SUBMARINE'S FIRST LIEUTENANT, WAS
ON THE FOREDECK TO TAKE TONY'S
SALUTE...



LIEUTENANT MAYNARD
REPORTING FOR DUTY ON
STRIKER, SIR!

COME
ABOARD,
MISTER
MAYNARD.

BRICE WAS ABOUT TO OFFER HIS
HAND TO TONY WHEN A VOICE STEEL
HARD AND ACID SHARP CAME FROM
ABOVE...



AND NOW, IF YOU HAVE
QUITE FINISHED PASSING
THE TIME OF DAY IN
PLEASANT CONVERSATION,
NUMBER ONE, PERHAPS
WE CAN THINK OF
CASTING OFF
AND LEAVING
HARBOUR! I'LL
SEE MISTER
MAYNARD IN
MY CABIN --
AT ONCE!

Killer Sub

STARTLED BY RAYNOR'S SARCASM, JACK BRICE SNAPPED ORDERS TO THE DECK CREW... AND TONY BEGAN TO CLIMB UP THE CONNING TOWER...



ONLY PHILIP RAYNOR COULD HAVE ANSWERED THAT ...

STRIKER IS FAST AND WITH A FIRST CLASS CREW. WE HAVEN'T HAD OUR FAIR SHARE OF TARGETS, OR LUCK ON PATROLS. BUT THERE WAS NO NEED TO PUT A DARNED SNOOPER ON BOARD TO CHECK ON US!



TONY SENSED AT ONCE THE BARRIER OF STIFF UNFRIENDLINESS AS HE ENTERED THE CAPTAIN'S CABIN ...



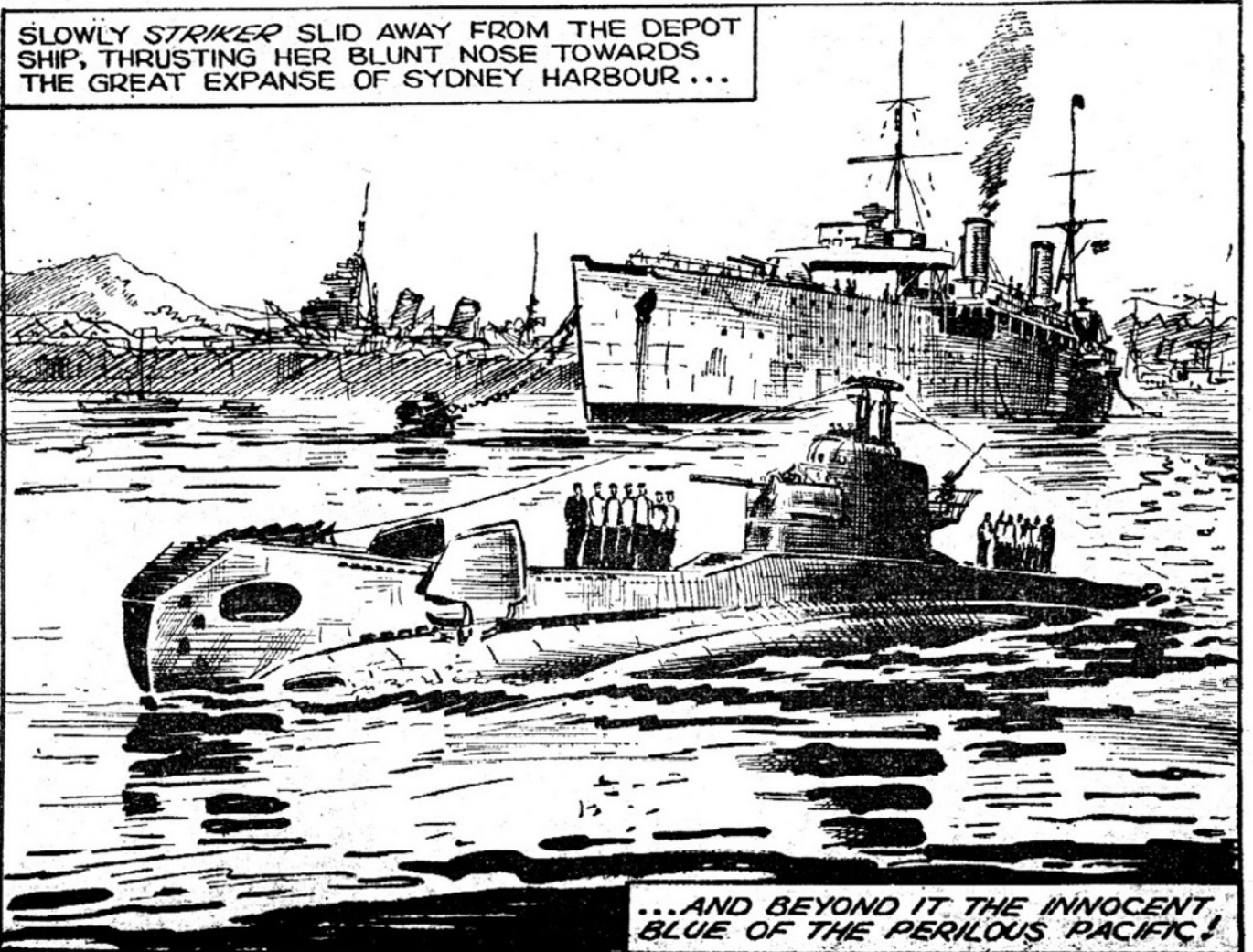
THEN THEY FELT *STRIKER* BEGIN TO MOVE SLIGHTLY...AND A HARSH COMMAND BARKED THROUGH THE LOUDSPEAKER ...

DO YOU HEAR THIS... ALL HANDS TO STATIONS FOR LEAVING HARBOUR!

THE BEST PLACE FOR YOU NOW, MISTER MAYNARD, IS IN THE CONNING TOWER WITH ME!



SLOWLY *STRIKER* SLID AWAY FROM THE DEPOT SHIP, THRUSTING HER BLUNT NOSE TOWARDS THE GREAT EXPANSE OF SYDNEY HARBOUR ...



...AND BEYOND IT THE INNOCENT BLUE OF THE PERILOUS PACIFIC!

THERE HAD BEEN NO ATTEMPT AT SECURITY...AS FAR AS ANY WATCHER WAS CONCERNED, A BRITISH SUBMARINE WAS LEAVING ITS BASE ON ORDINARY 'PATROL'...



SOMEHOW IT SEEMED THAT THE OTHER OFFICERS REFLECTED RAYNOR'S HOSTILITY TO THE NEWCOMER...

AND THIS IS MIKE NUGENT, OUR NAVIGATOR! PILOT, MEET TONY MAYNARD, THE OBSERVER FROM INTELLIGENCE DEPARTMENT!



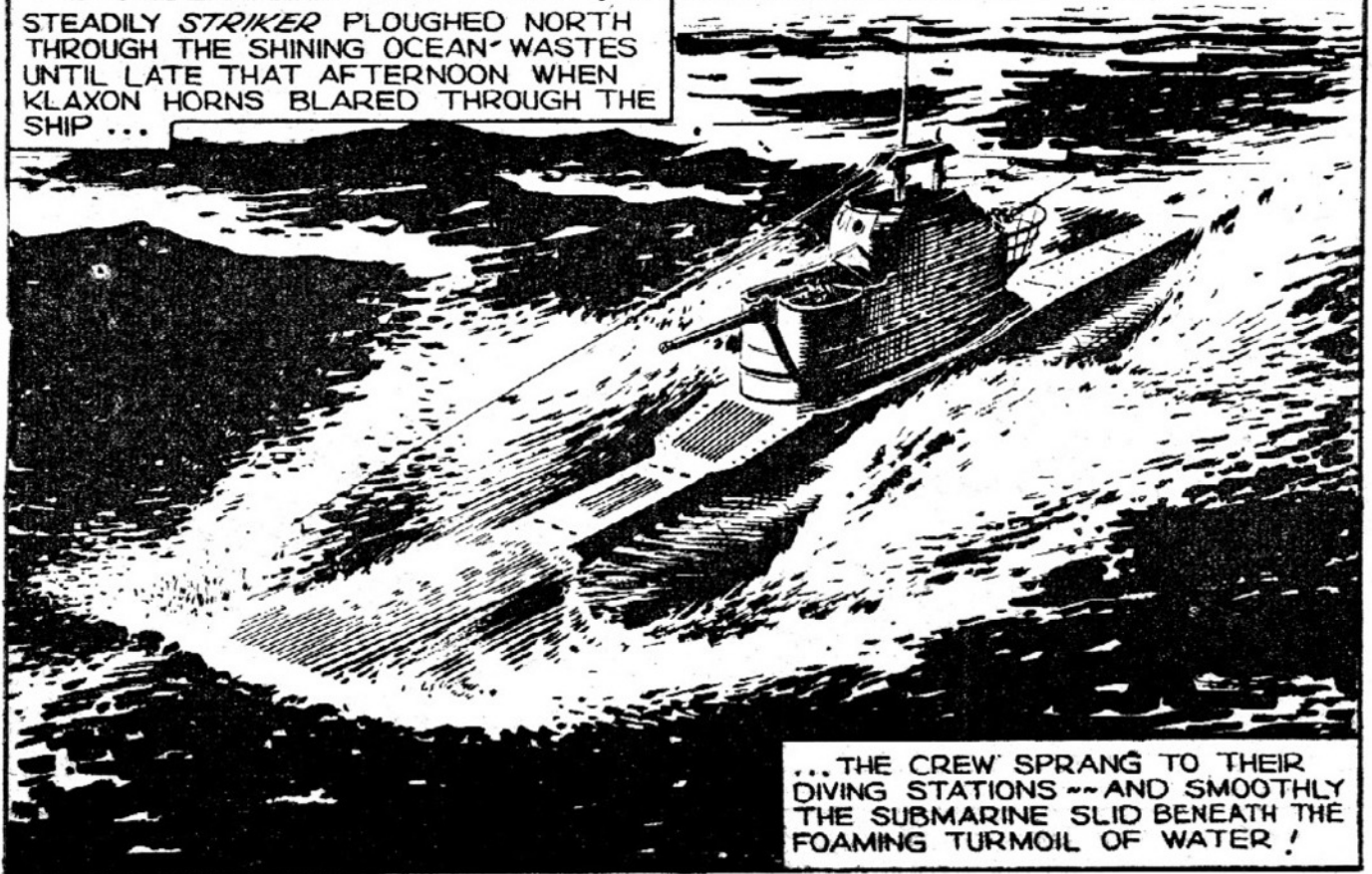
WITH A WRY GRIN TO HIMSELF, TONY RETURNED TO THE SICK BAY. LYING ON ONE OF THE CRAMPED COTS, HE WENT OVER AND OVER THE DEFENCES OF YOSHIKANA HARBOUR IN HIS MIND.



...THE FIRST MINEFIELD IS SET BETWEEN THIRTY AND FIFTY FEET~~ COMPLETELY SEALING THE HARBOUR EXCEPT FOR A GAP AT ONE EDGE TWENTY FEET WIDE~~AND THE GUARDED ENTRANCE CHANNEL...

Chapter 2. SEALED ORDERS

STEADILY *STRIKER* PLOUGHED NORTH THROUGH THE SHINING OCEAN WASTES UNTIL LATE THAT AFTERNOON WHEN KLAXON HORNS BLARED THROUGH THE SHIP ...



... THE CREW SPRANG TO THEIR DIVING STATIONS -- AND SMOOTHLY THE SUBMARINE SLID BENEATH THE FOAMING TURMOIL OF WATER !

THEY HAD PASSED A CERTAIN LINE ... BEYOND IT LURKED THE ENEMY IN MANY SHAPES OF DANGER. FROM THAT MOMENT THEY TRAVELLED SUBMERGED BY DAY, ONLY SURFACING FOR THE SHORT HOURS OF NIGHT'S CONCEALING DARKNESS.



WE SHOULD REACH OUR FIRST PATROL AREA AT DAWN, NUMBER ONE-- CALL ME AN HOUR BEFORE THEN, PLEASE.

VERY GOOD, SIR ! MAYBE WE'LL BE LUCKY RIGHT OFF -- AND FIND A NICE FAT JAP CRUISER WAITING FOR US !

BUT WHEN THE GLOWING GOLDEN BALL OF THE SUN LIFTED OVER THE HORIZON NEXT MORNING, STRIKER WAS SUBMERGED AGAIN -- AND PHILIP RAYNOR GOT HIS FIRST SHOCK!

MY INSTRUCTIONS WERE TO HAND YOU THESE SEALED ORDERS WHEN WE REACHED OUR PRESENT POSITION!

ORDERS? GREAT SCOTT, WHAT IS THIS ALL ABOUT?

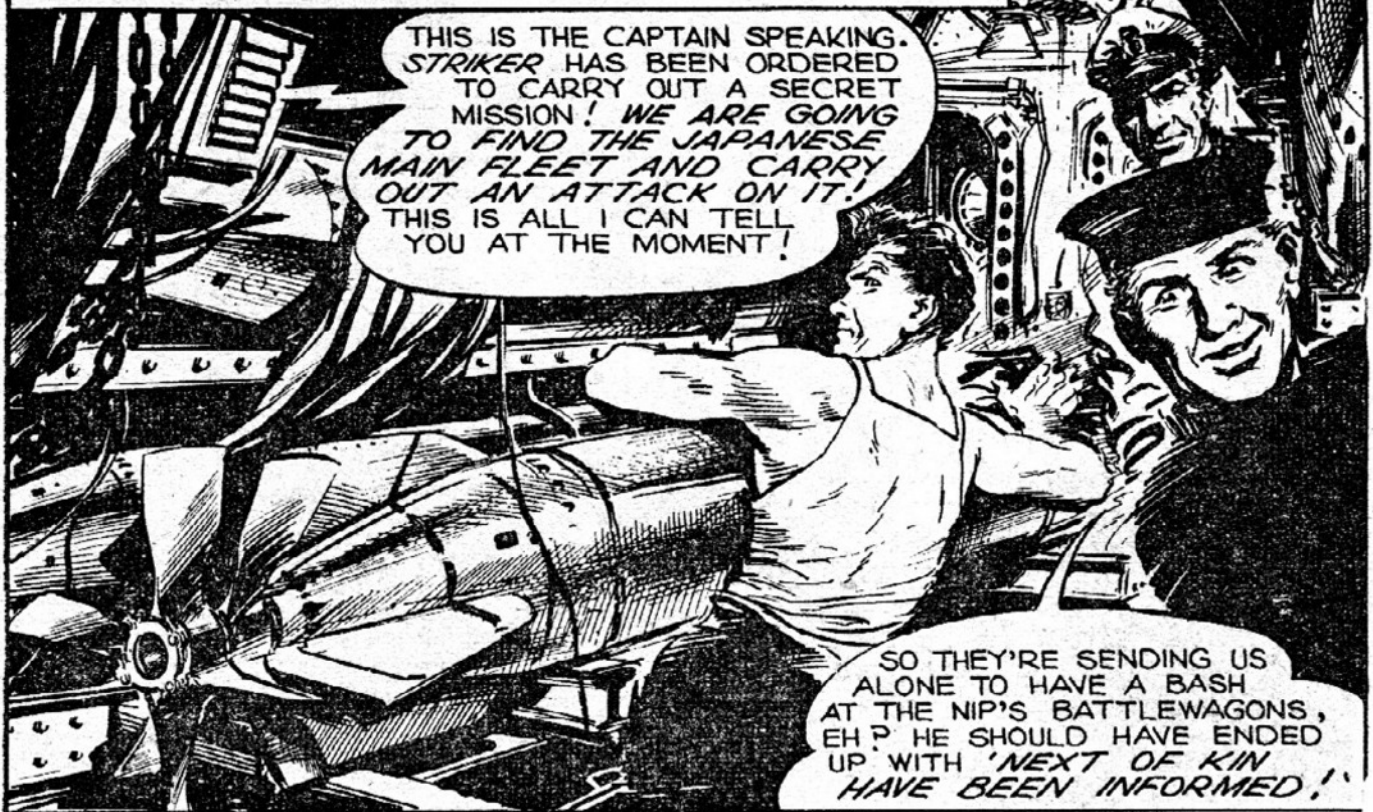
THEY ARE TOP SECRET, SIR -- I WOULD ADVISE YOU TO READ THEM IN YOUR CABIN!

TONY FOLLOWED THE MYSTIFIED OFFICER TO THE CABIN -- AND WATCHED RAYNOR'S AMAZEMENT AS HE READ THE ORDERS.

...STRIKER IS TO PROCEED WITH ALL SPEED -- TO PENETRATE INTO YOSHIKANA HARBOUR AND DESTROY, DAMAGE OR RENDER USELESS ALL SUCH ENEMY VESSELS AS IS POSSIBLE. LIEUTENANT MAYNARD WILL ASSIST CARRYING OUT THE MISSION.

I KNOW ALL THE NECESSARY INFORMATION FOR GETTING THROUGH THE HARBOUR OBSTACLES WHEN WE GO IN, SIR!

STILL SLIGHTLY OFF BALANCE WITH AMAZEMENT, RAYNOR CALLED AN IMMEDIATE CONFERENCE OF OFFICERS ~ AND TOLD THEM *STRIKER'S* NEW TASK. THEN HE MADE AN ANNOUNCEMENT TO THE CREW ~ OMITTING CERTAIN FACTS.



THIS IS THE CAPTAIN SPEAKING. *STRIKER* HAS BEEN ORDERED TO CARRY OUT A SECRET MISSION! WE ARE GOING TO FIND THE JAPANESE MAIN FLEET AND CARRY OUT AN ATTACK ON IT! THIS IS ALL I CAN TELL YOU AT THE MOMENT!

SO THEY'RE SENDING US ALONE TO HAVE A BASH AT THE NIP'S BATTLEWAGONS, EH? HE SHOULD HAVE ENDED UP WITH 'NEXT OF KIN' HAVE BEEN INFORMED!

ALREADY TONY MAYNARD WAS WORKING OUT THE NEW COURSE WITH THE NAVIGATOR. BESIDE HIM WAS RAYNOR, STILL BEING NAGGED BY UNYIELDING PRIDE.



WE SHOULD TAKE A ZIG-ZIG COURSE FROM HERE TO FIFTY MILES SOUTH OF YOSHIKANA ...

WHY THE HECK DID THEY SEND THIS TEXT BOOK SAILOR ALONG? DON'T THEY THINK I'M CAPABLE OF GETTING THERE ~ AND WITH THE DEFENCES MARKED ON A CHART I COULD HAVE TAKEN *STRIKER* THROUGH THEM!

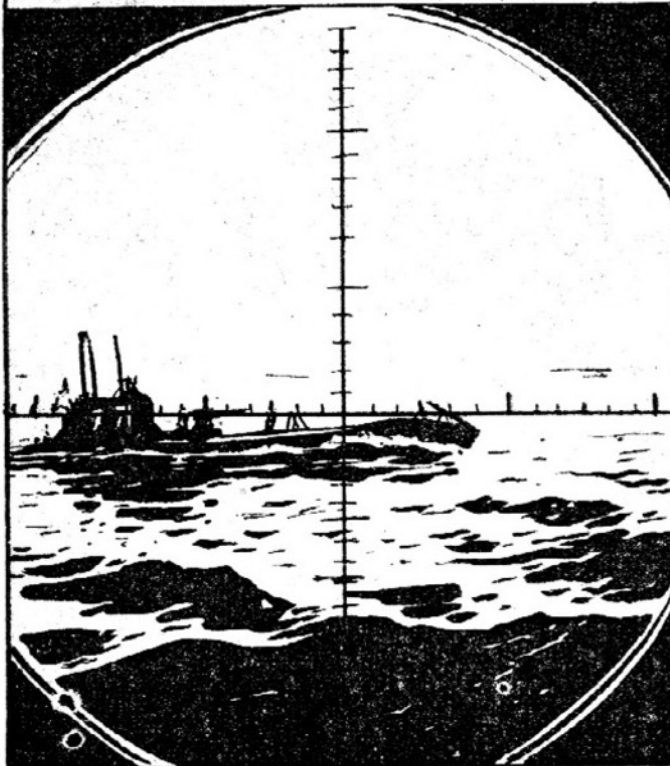
THEN LATE THAT AFTERNOON THE DUTY OFFICER, BRICE, SUDDENLY JERKED AWAY FROM THE PERISCOPE, HIS EYES BRIGHT WITH EAGER EXCITEMENT ...

ENEMY TARGET CROSSING OUR COURSE -- IT'S A SITTING DUCK! CALL THE CAPTAIN AT ONCE!

I'M HERE, NUMBER ONE!



RAYNOR BENT TO THE PERISCOPE ...



AND THE LENS FILLED WITH A PERFECT TARGET... A JAPANESE SUBMARINE!

A JAP SUB -- SHE'S CUTTING OUR COURSE FROM OUR PORT BEAM. STAND BY FORWARD TORPEDO TUBES!

STAND BY FORWARD TUBES, SIR!



JACK BRICE LIFTED THE RELAY PHONE ~ AND FROZE IN MID-ACT AS TONY MAYNARD'S VOICE CUT IN, QUIETLY YET FULL OF AUTHORITY ...

HOLD IT, NUMBER ONE! COMMANDER, I THINK YOU OUGHT TO RECONSIDER THAT ATTACK ORDER.

BY THUNDER! YOU DARE TO INTERFERE...



TONY'S LEVEL GAZE MET RAYNOR'S BLAZING EYES UNFLINCHINGLY ...

THERE ARE TWO REASONS, SIR ~ FIRSTLY, YOU'LL NEED EVERY TORPEDO YOU'VE GOT FOR OUR MISSION ~ AND SECONDLY, THAT SUB'S COURSE SUGGESTS THAT SHE'S HEADING FOR THE SAME PLACE! SO SHE'S NOT A MENACE TO ANYBODY AT THE MOMENT!



THE ICE-COLD LOGIC OF THE YOUNG OFFICER BIT CLEANLY THROUGH RAYNOR'S SEETHING ANGER. IT COULD NOT BE IGNORED! RELUCTANTLY HE NODDED ...

BELAY THAT LAST ORDER, MISTER BRICE ~ WE ARE NOT ATTACKING!



COR, STONE ME! WHO'S RUNNING THIS PIG-BOAT? THE FIRST TARGET WE'VE HAD IN TWO PATROLS AND THE SKIPPER LETS AN ADMIRALTY LAND-LUBBER TALK HIM OUT OF IT!

SO H.M.S. *STRIKER* WENT ON ... AND THE INCIDENT ALMOST BECAME FORGOTTEN WITH THE PASSING DAYS. THEN, ONE NIGHT A WEEK LATER, THE SUBMARINE HAD SLIGHT ENGINE TROUBLE ...



ENGINE ROOM CHIEF SAYS IT'LL TAKE HIM THREE HOURS TO MAKE A COMPLETE JOB OF THE REPAIRS, SIR!

HMMM! IT'LL HAVE TO BE DONE PROPERLY TO STAND UP TO WHAT IS AHEAD OF US. WE'LL HAVE TO MAKE UP TIME BY STAYING ON THE SURFACE FOR THREE HOURS AFTER DAWN!

THE REPAIRS WERE FINISHED BY DAWN ... AND AT FULL SPEED *STRIKER* WAS RACING THROUGH THE FIRST HOURS ... MAKING UP VITAL LOST TIME, WHEN A YELL OF ALARM RANG OUT!



AIRCRAFT!
TWO PLANES ON THE PORT QUARTER!

WE'RE OUT OF RANGE OF OUR OWN AIRFIELDS--
THEY MUST BE JAPS!
CLEAR FOR DIVE!

RAYNOR'S HAND STABBED FOR THE EMERGENCY ACTION BUTTON ON THE BRIDGE BESIDE HIM ~ ~ BUT STEEL FINGERS CAUGHT HIS WRIST...

IT'S TOO LATE, SIR ~ ~ AFTER YOU DIVE THOSE PLANES WILL REPORT OUR POSITION AND THEN SHADOW US! THE DEFENCES AT YOSHIKANA WILL BE ALERTED! THOSE AIRCRAFT MUST BE DESTROYED!



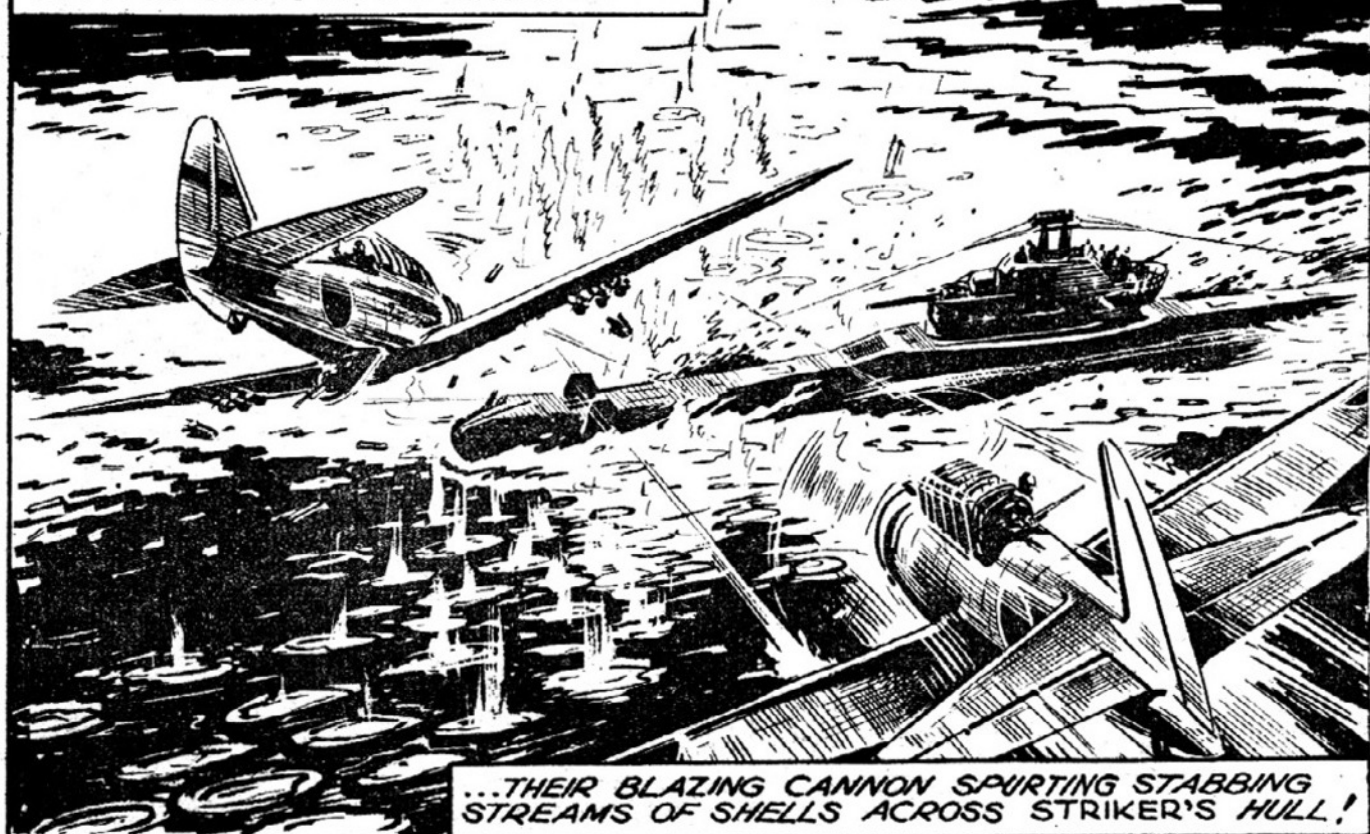
FOR A SPLIT SECOND RAYNOR'S PROUD TEMPER FLARED ~ ~ THEN THE YOUNG OFFICER'S COMMON-SENSE TORE IT TO SHREDS ~ ~ AND HE RASPED A NEW ORDER INTO THE VOICE PIPE!

ANTI-AIRCRAFT ACTION STATIONS!



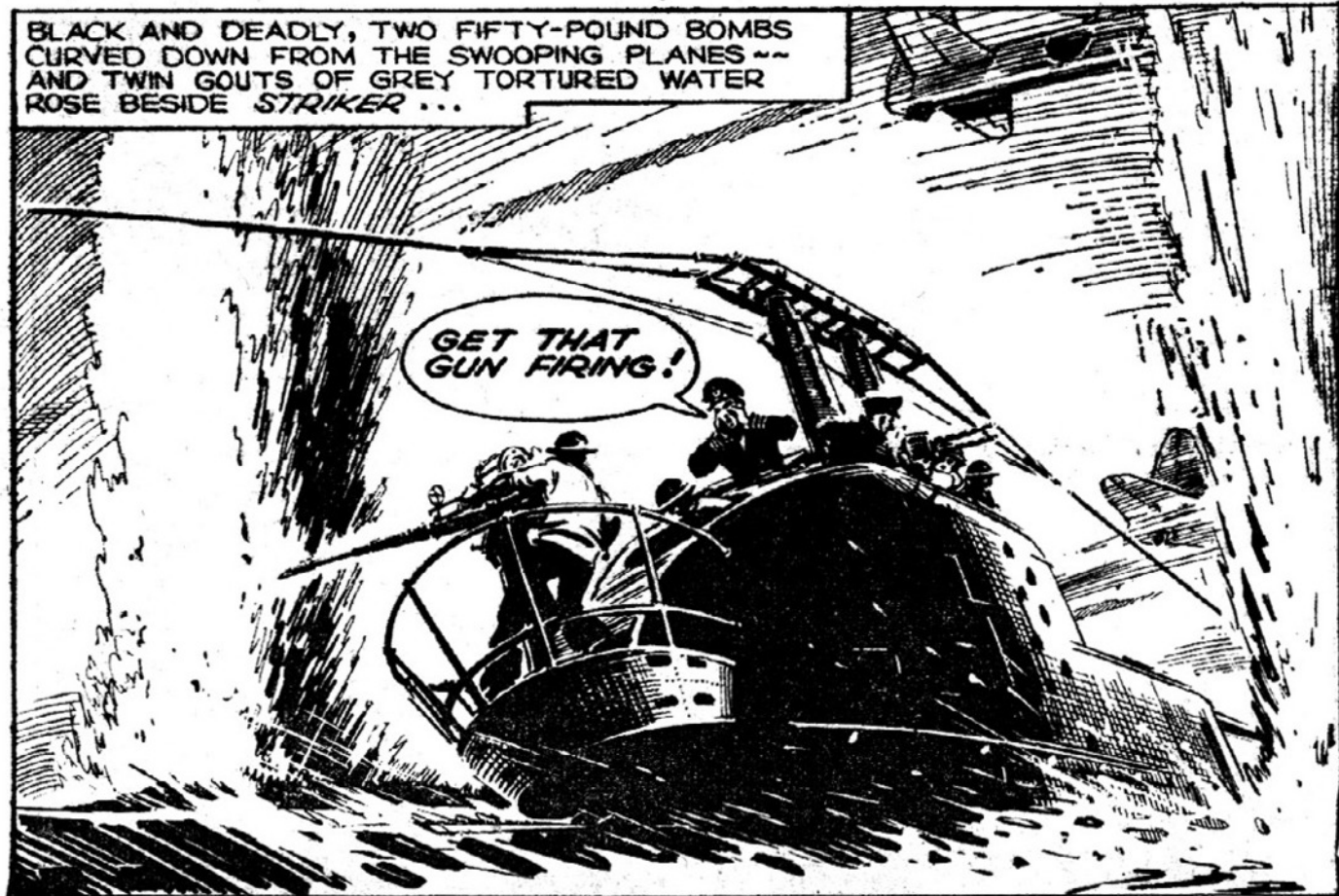
GUN CREW ON DECK AT THE DOUBLE!

LIKE STRIKING HAWKS, THE TWO JAP FIGHTER-BOMBERS SCREAMED DOWN ON THE SLIM STEEL SHAPE BELOW...

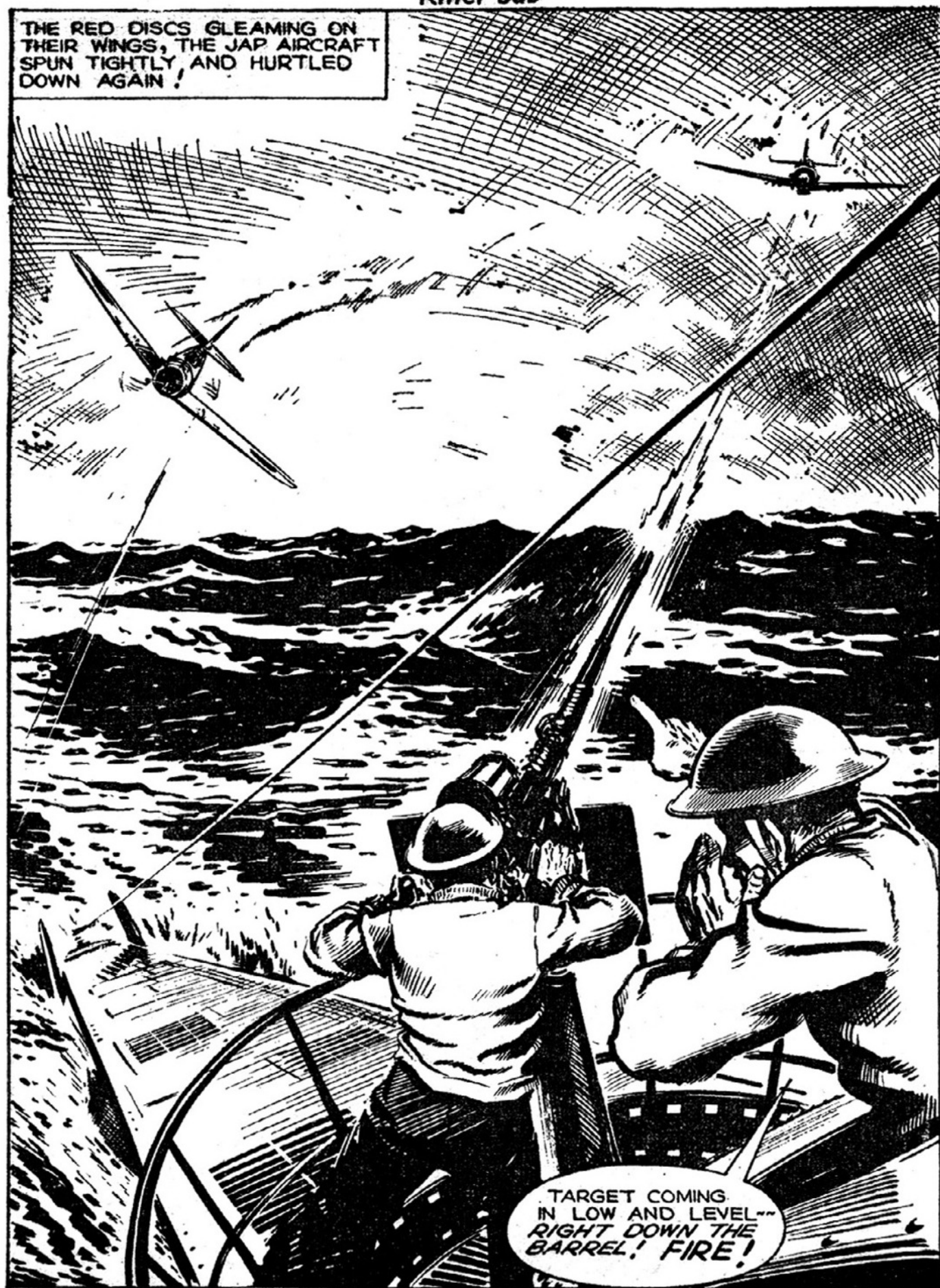


...THEIR BLAZING CANNON SPURTING STABBING STREAMS OF SHELLS ACROSS STRIKER'S HULL!

BLACK AND DEADLY, TWO FIFTY-POUND BOMBS CURVED DOWN FROM THE SWOOPING PLANES -- AND TWIN GOUTS OF GREY TORTURED WATER ROSE BESIDE STRIKER...

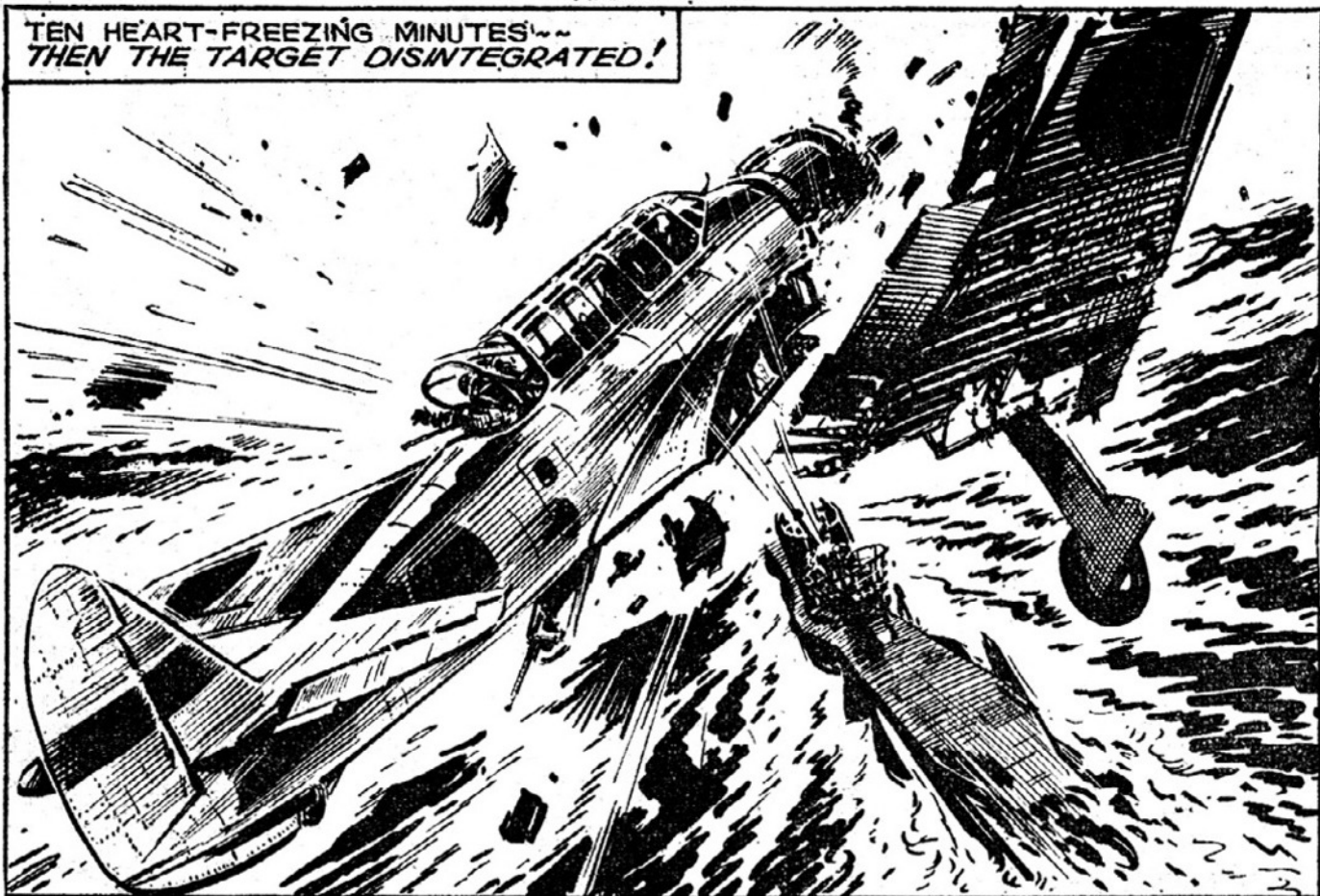


THE RED DISCS GLEAMING ON THEIR WINGS, THE JAP AIRCRAFT SPUN TIGHTLY AND HURTTLED DOWN AGAIN!



TARGET COMING
IN LOW AND LEVEL--
RIGHT DOWN THE
BARREL! FIRE!

TEN HEART-FREEZING MINUTES~~~
THEN THE TARGET DISINTEGRATED!



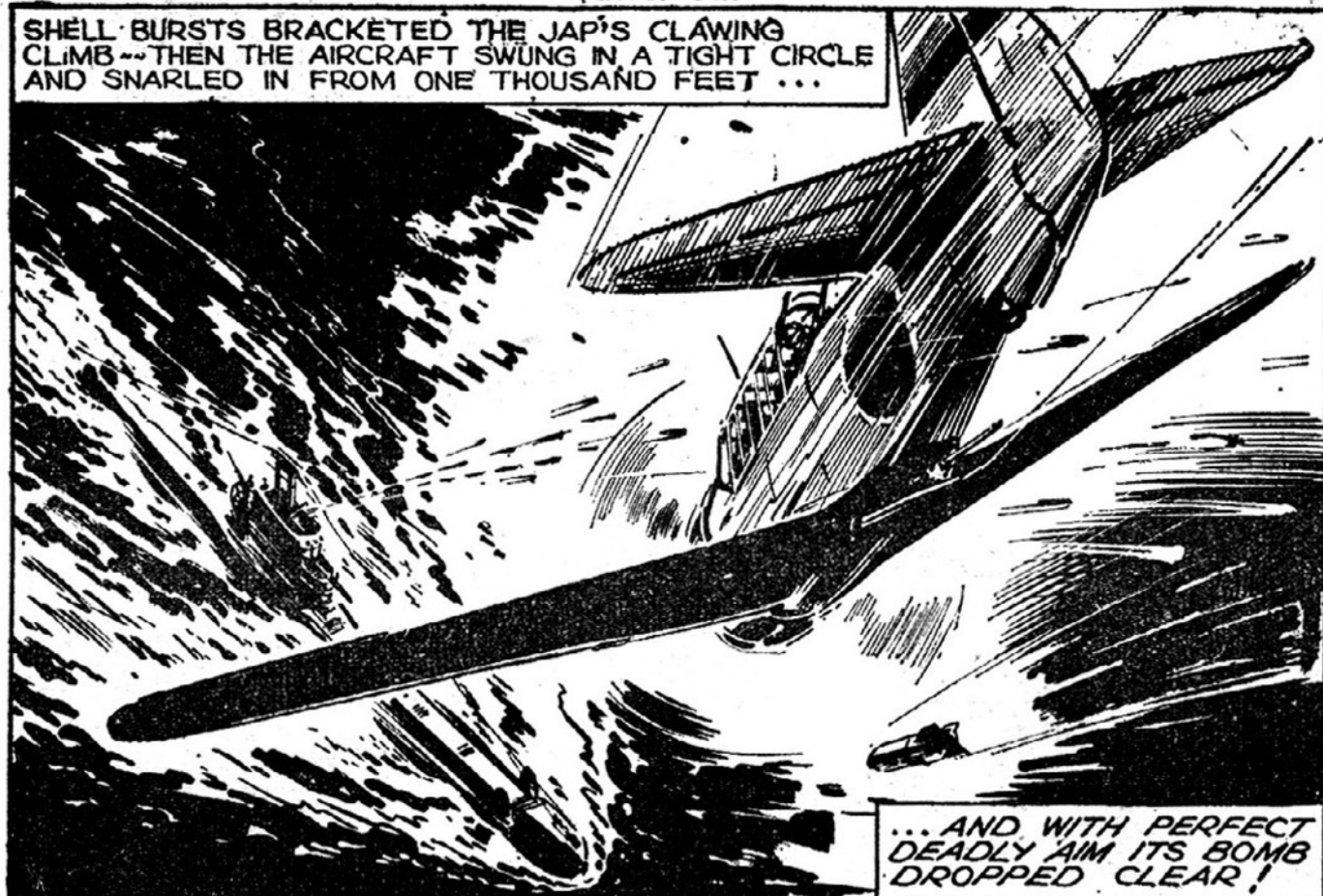
THE TWISTED TORTURED WRECKAGE PLUNGED
DOWN INTO THE SEA~~~AND WAS GONE
WITHOUT A TRACE! THE SECOND JAP
SWUNG AWAY OUT OF THE ATTACK LINE...



BY GOLLY, SIR~~~
WE'VE SCARED
HIM OFF!

BUT NOT FOR
LONG! HE'LL BE
BACK FOR ANOTHER
BOMBING RUN~~~
FROM HIGHER UP!

SHELL BURSTS BRACKETED THE JAP'S CLAWING CLIMB--THEN THE AIRCRAFT SWUNG IN A TIGHT CIRCLE AND SNARLED IN FROM ONE THOUSAND FEET ...



... AND WITH PERFECT DEADLY AIM ITS BOMB DROPPED CLEAR!

IN THAT SINGLE SPLIT SECOND OF TIME, TONY MAYNARD ACTED! HE THRUST THE MACHINE-GUNNER ASIDE--AND SWUNG THE BROWNING'S AS HE SIGHTED. THEN A STABBING STREAM OF TRACER SLICED UP-- AND THE PLANE DISINTEGRATED IN ONE EYE-SEARING FLASH!



JUST A BLACK PALL OF SMOKE DRIFTED WHERE THE JAP PLANE HAD BEEN -- AND TONY'S VOICE SOUNDED UNNATURALLY LOUD AFTER THE THUNDERING EXPLOSION.

I DON'T THINK THEY HAD TIME TO REPORT US BY RADIO, SIR -- BUT MAYBE WE OUGHT TO GO DOWN IN CASE THERE ARE ANY MORE SWARMING AROUND!

AS USUAL, MISTER MAYNARD, YOU'RE -- AH -- RIGHT!

LUMME, SIR, WE'LL NEVER SEE SHOOTING LIKE THAT AGAIN!

LEAVING JUST A DYING PATTERN OF SWIRLING FOAM ON THE SURFACE, *STRIKER* SLID UNDERWATER -- TO CONTINUE HER APPROACH TO YOSHIKANA. FOR TWO DAYS AND A NIGHT THE SLEEK SUBMARINE BORED NORTHWARDS...UNTIL...

TEN-THIRTY, SIR... SHOULD BE BLACK AS PITCH ON TOP!

WE'RE RIGHT ON TIME AND IN POSITION. NOW IT'S UP TO MISTER MAYNARD TO GET US THROUGH THE MINEFIELDS... AND THROUGH THE DEFENCES...

AT A SLIGHT NOD FROM TONY, RAYNOR PICKED UP THE MICROPHONE OF THE LOUDSPEAKER SYSTEM...

THIS IS THE CAPTAIN SPEAKING! I CAN NOW TELL YOU OUR MISSION. *VERY SOON 'STRIKER' IS GOING THROUGH THE DEFENCES GUARDING YOSHIKANA HARBOUR!* ONCE WE GET IN THERE HALF THE IMPERIAL JAPANESE FLEET WILL BE BEGGING FOR OUR TIN FISH AND I KNOW I CAN DEPEND ON ALL OF YOU TO GIVE 'EM THE LOT WHERE IT HURTS MOST. THAT IS ALL EXCEPT--GOOD LUCK!

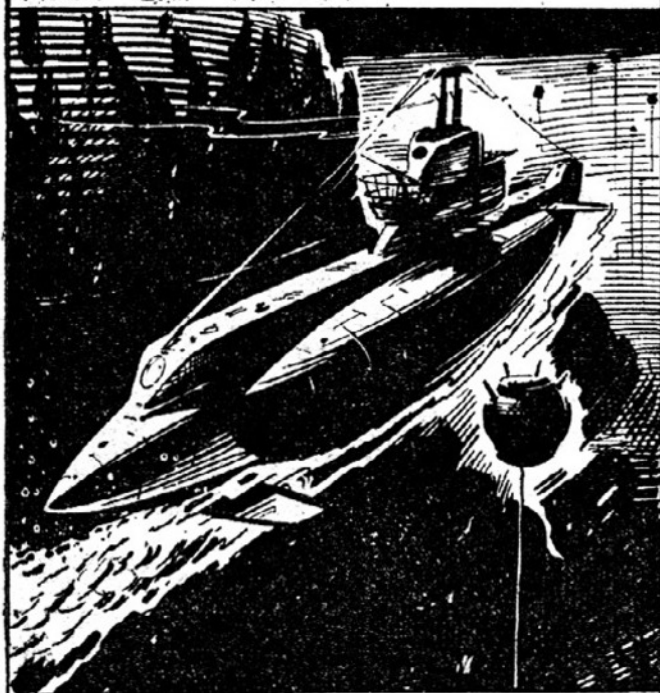
NOW MAYBE I CAN CHALK UP A DECENT SCORE ON THIS DARNED BOARD!

BABY, YOU'RE GOING TO GET A NICE FAT BATTLEWAGON, ALL TO YOURSELF!

STANDING BESIDE THE CHART TABLE, AND GUIDED BY EVERY TINY DETAIL HE HAD MEMORISED, TONY BEGAN TO GIVE QUIET ORDERS. *STRIKER* GLIDED FORWARD AT QUARTER SPEED...

... HER SLIM BOWS POINTING AT THE THICKLY SOWN MENACE OF THE MINEFIELD AHEAD!

SLOWLY *STRIKER* CHANGED COURSE-- AND SLID TOWARDS THE EDGE OF THAT BARRIER OF DEATH. WHERE IT MET THE UPTHRUSTING JAW OF THE HARBOUR, THERE WAS A TWENTY FOOT GAP ...

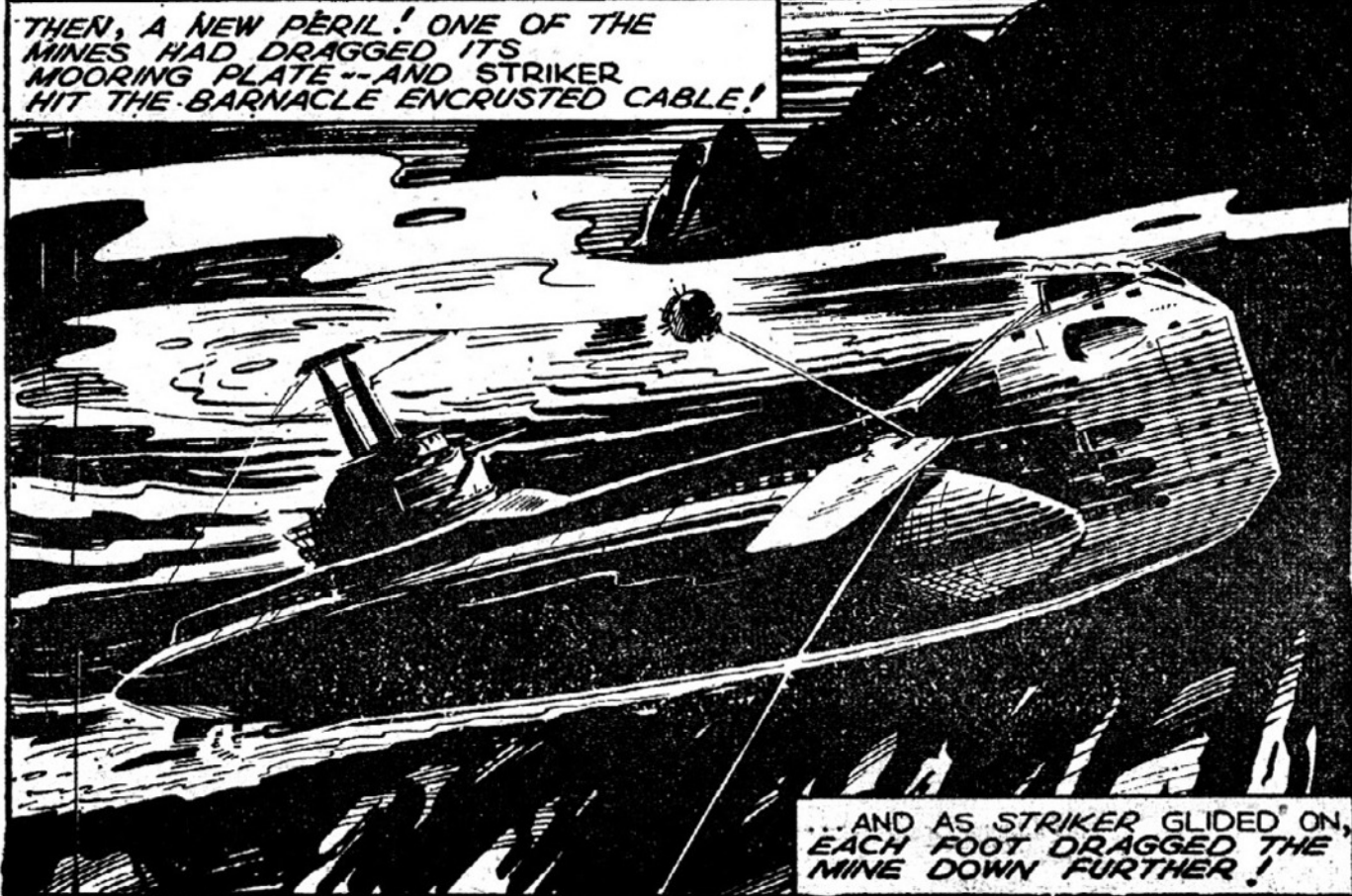


... OVER A JUMBLED, JAGGED MASS OF GREEDY BLACK ROCKS!

INCH BY INCH THE SUBMARINE CREEPT INTO THE GAP, ALMOST SCRAPING THE RAZOR-TOOTHED ROCKS WHICH WAITED TO RIP HER APART LIKE A CARDBOARD TOY ...



THEN, A NEW PÉRIL! ONE OF THE MINES HAD DRAGGED ITS MOORING PLATE--AND *STRIKER* HIT THE BARNACLE ENCRUSTED CABLE!



... AND AS *STRIKER* GLIDED ON, EACH FOOT DRAGGED THE MINE DOWN FURTHER!

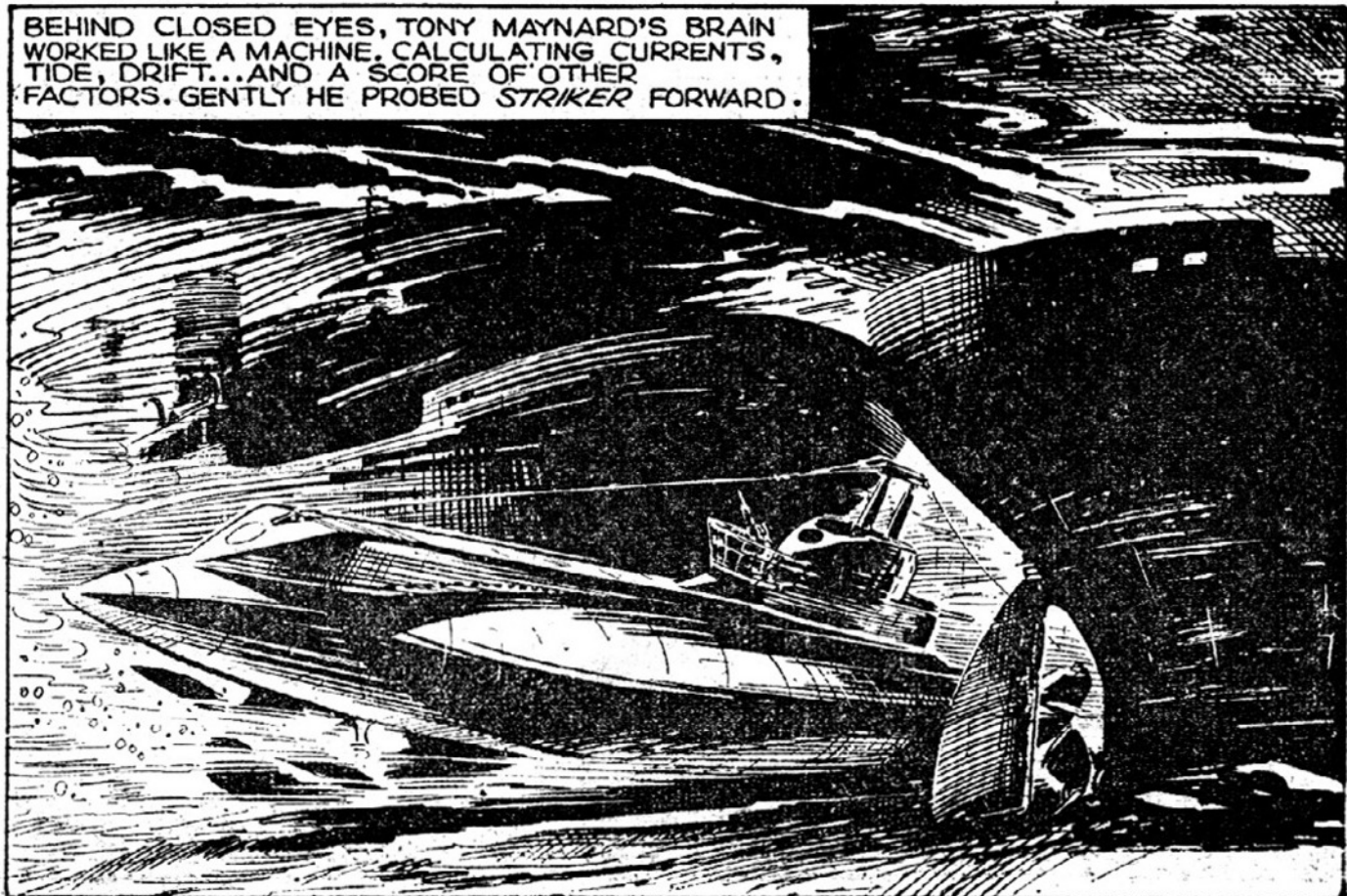
BUT THAT GRINDING TOUCH SENT A WARNING SHIVER THROUGH THE HULL ~ TONY MAYNARD YELLED AN URGENT ORDER ~ AND STRIKER'S SCREW SPUN INTO FULL ASTERN!



WE'RE THROUGH THE MINEFIELD BELT! NOW THERE ARE TWO SUNKEN SHIPS AHEAD! IF WE TRY TO PASS OVER 'EM, THE GUARD SHIPS ABOVE MIGHT SPOT US, SO WE'LL GO UNDER 'EM! STARBOARD A QUARTER!

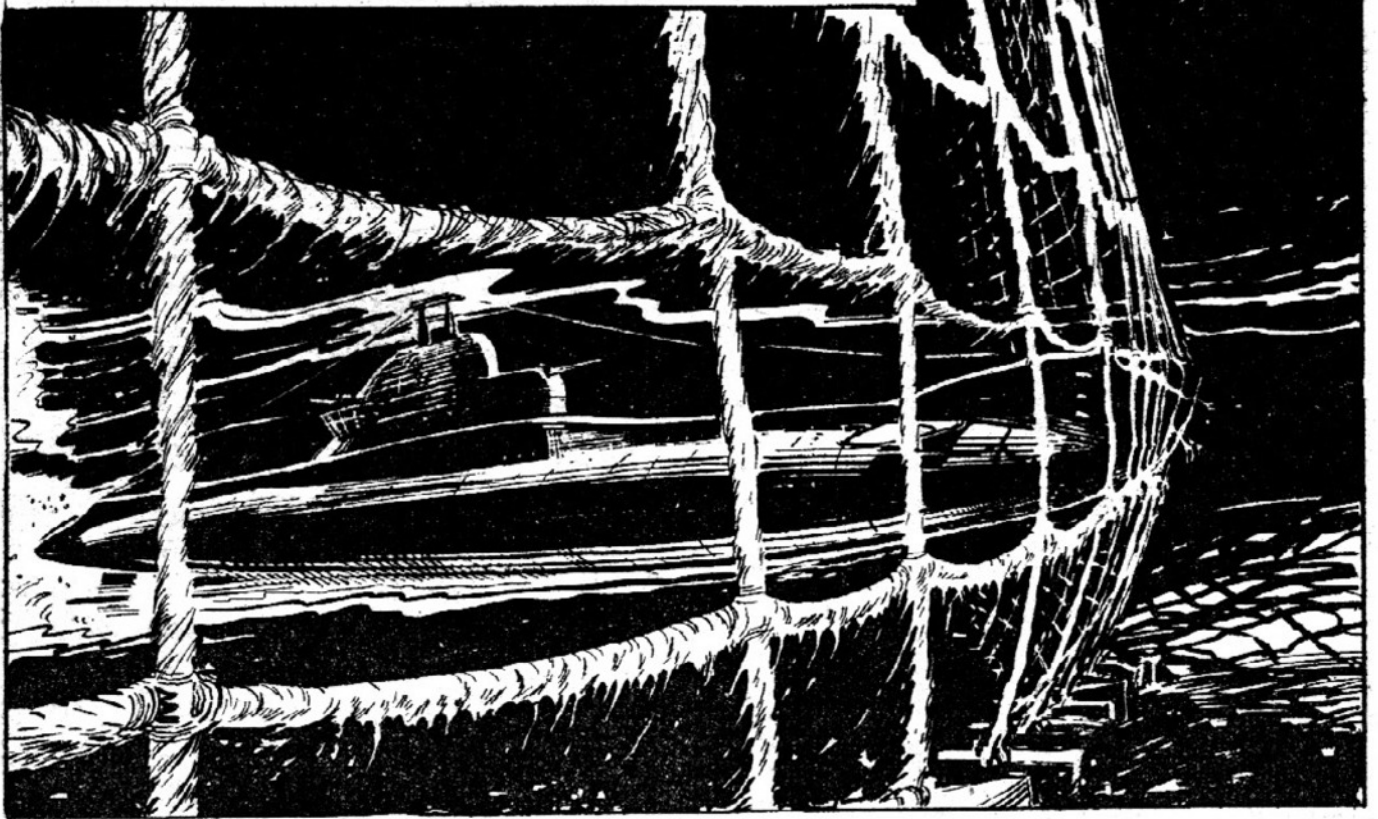


BEHIND CLOSED EYES, TONY MAYNARD'S BRAIN WORKED LIKE A MACHINE. CALCULATING CURRENTS, TIDE, DRIFT... AND A SCORE OF OTHER FACTORS. GENTLY HE PROBED STRIKER FORWARD.



Killer Sub

AS DELICATELY AS IF HE WERE THREADING A NEEDLE WITH GUN COTTON, TONY MAYNARD EASED STRIKER THROUGH THAT SIDE-SCRAPING GAP ~ AND STRAIGHT INTO THE LAST BARRIER!



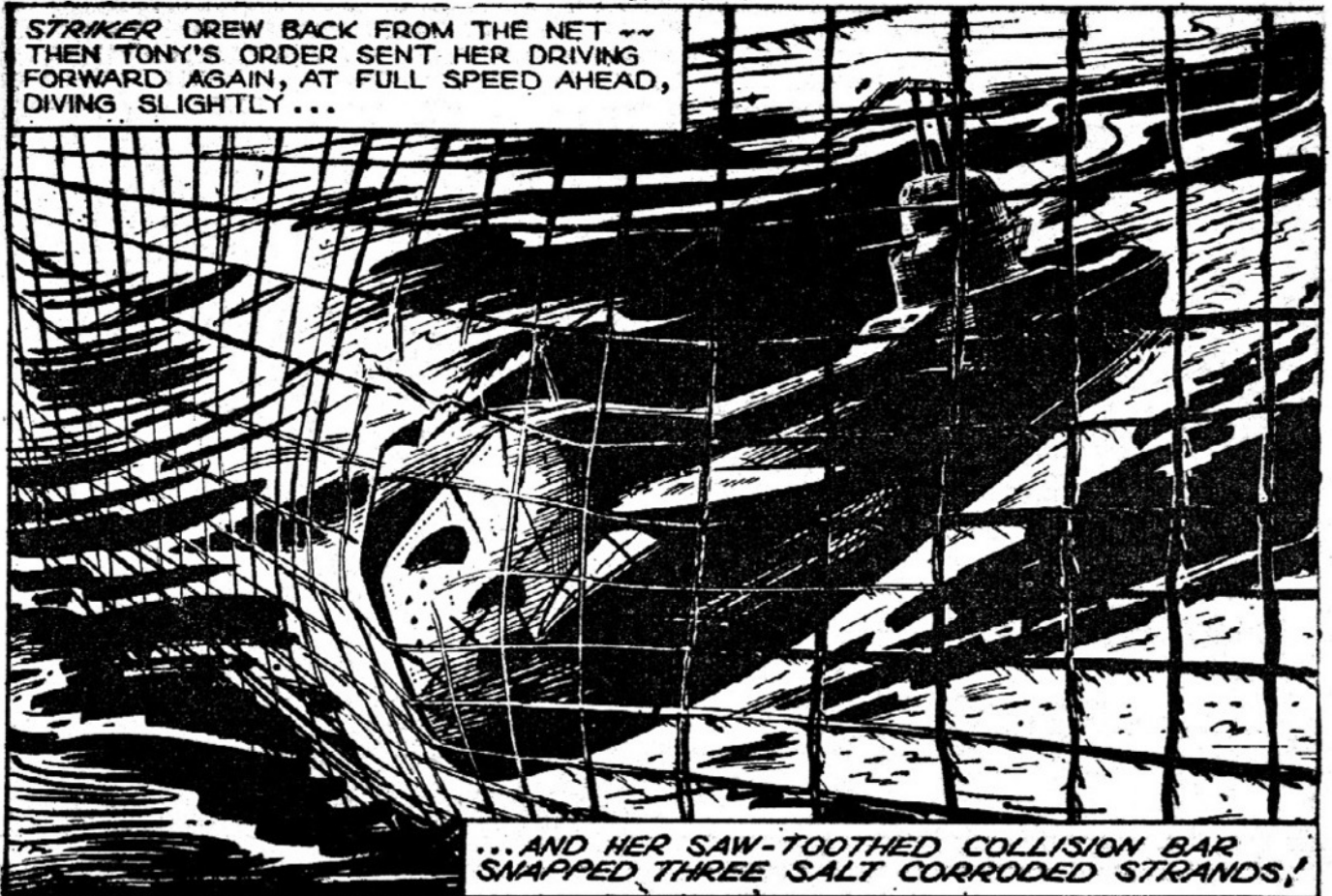
IT WAS A HUGE, HANGING, STEEL CORDED NET! INSIDE STRIKER MANY OF THE CREW FELL WITH THE SHOCK AS THEIR CRAFT WAS DRAGGED TO A STOP!

ANTI-SUBMARINE NET!
THIS ONE WE CAN'T
GO UNDER!



THEY'VE MOVED IT
NEARER THE ENTRANCE
SINCE WE HEARD ABOUT IT!
BUT WE'LL STILL BEAT IT,
BY GOING THROUGH IT!
HELMSMAN, SLOW ASTERN BOTH!

STRIKER DREW BACK FROM THE NET -- THEN TONY'S ORDER SENT HER DRIVING FORWARD AGAIN, AT FULL SPEED AHEAD, DIVING SLIGHTLY ...



...AND HER SAW-TOOTHED COLLISION BAR SNAPPED THREE SALT CORRODED STRANDS!

TWICE MORE THE UNDERWATER CRAFT DREW BACK AND CHARGED -- EACH TIME RIPPING DEEPER INTO THE NET. THE FOURTH ASSAULT ...

NO RESISTANCE -- AND LISTEN, WE'RE SCRAPING THROUGH!

YES, CAPTAIN, AND THE JAPS ARE GOING TO PAY DEARLY FOR NOT REPLACING THAT NET MORE OFTEN -- THE WIRES MUST HAVE BEEN HALF RUSTED THROUGH!



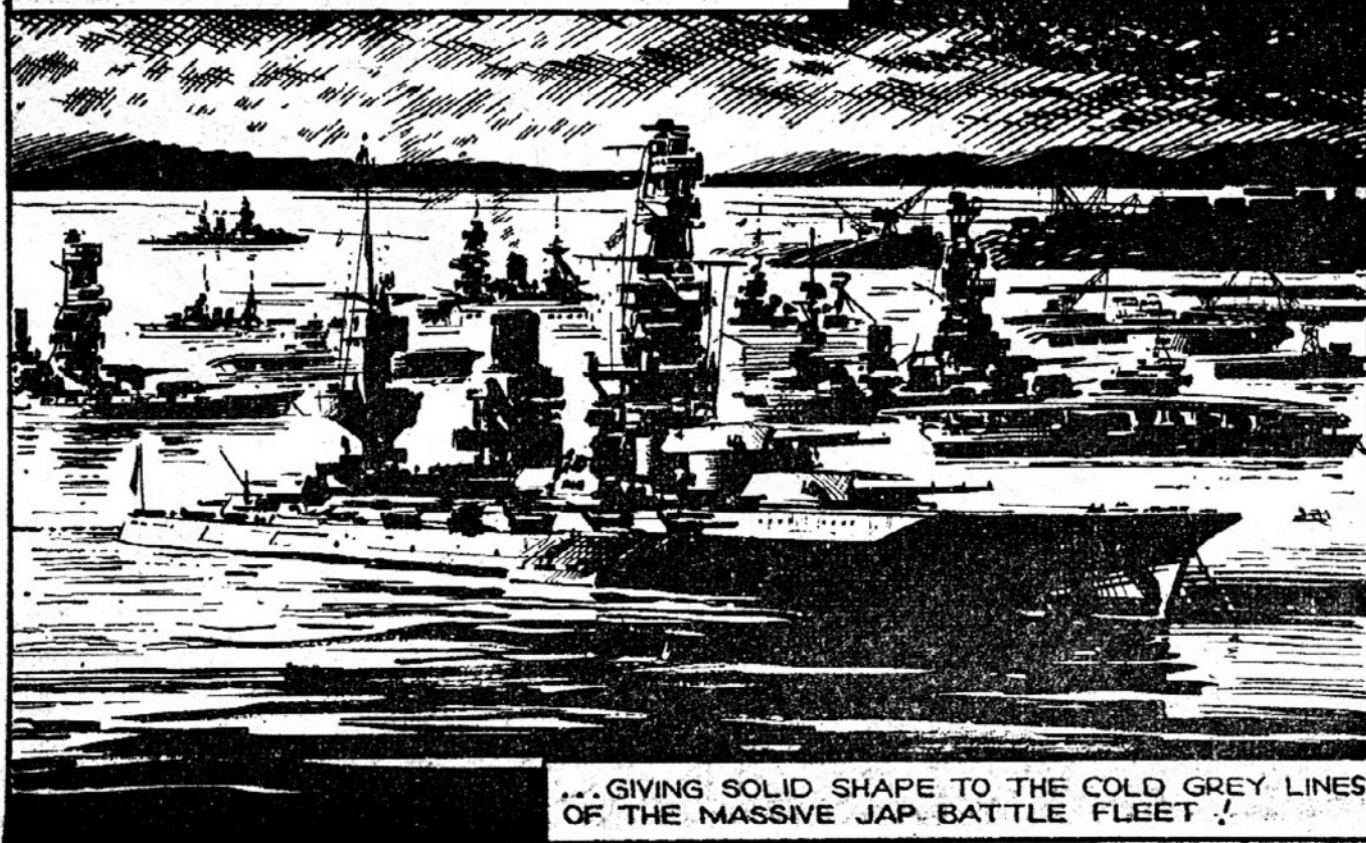
Killer Sub

FIVE MINUTES LATER, *STRIKER* SANK SOFTLY ON THE SAND BED IN THE CENTRE OF YOSHIKANA HARBOUR...

GENTLEMEN, THE REST OF THE PLAN IS SIMPLE. WE WAIT UNTIL DAWN -- *THEN ATTACK!* WITH SURPRISE ON OUR SIDE WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO GET OFF ALL TORPEDOES. AFTER THAT, WE WILL MAKE AN ATTEMPT TO GET OUT!



THE TENSION-FILLED MINUTES GREW INTO LONG DRAGGING HOURS, GNAWING AT EVERY MAN'S NERVES AS THEY WATCHED THE CRAWLING CLOCK HANDS. THEN AT LAST DAWN'S RAYS BEGAN TO CREEP OVER THE HARBOUR ABOVE THEM...



...GIVING SOLID SHAPE TO THE COLD GREY LINES OF THE MASSIVE JAP BATTLE FLEET!

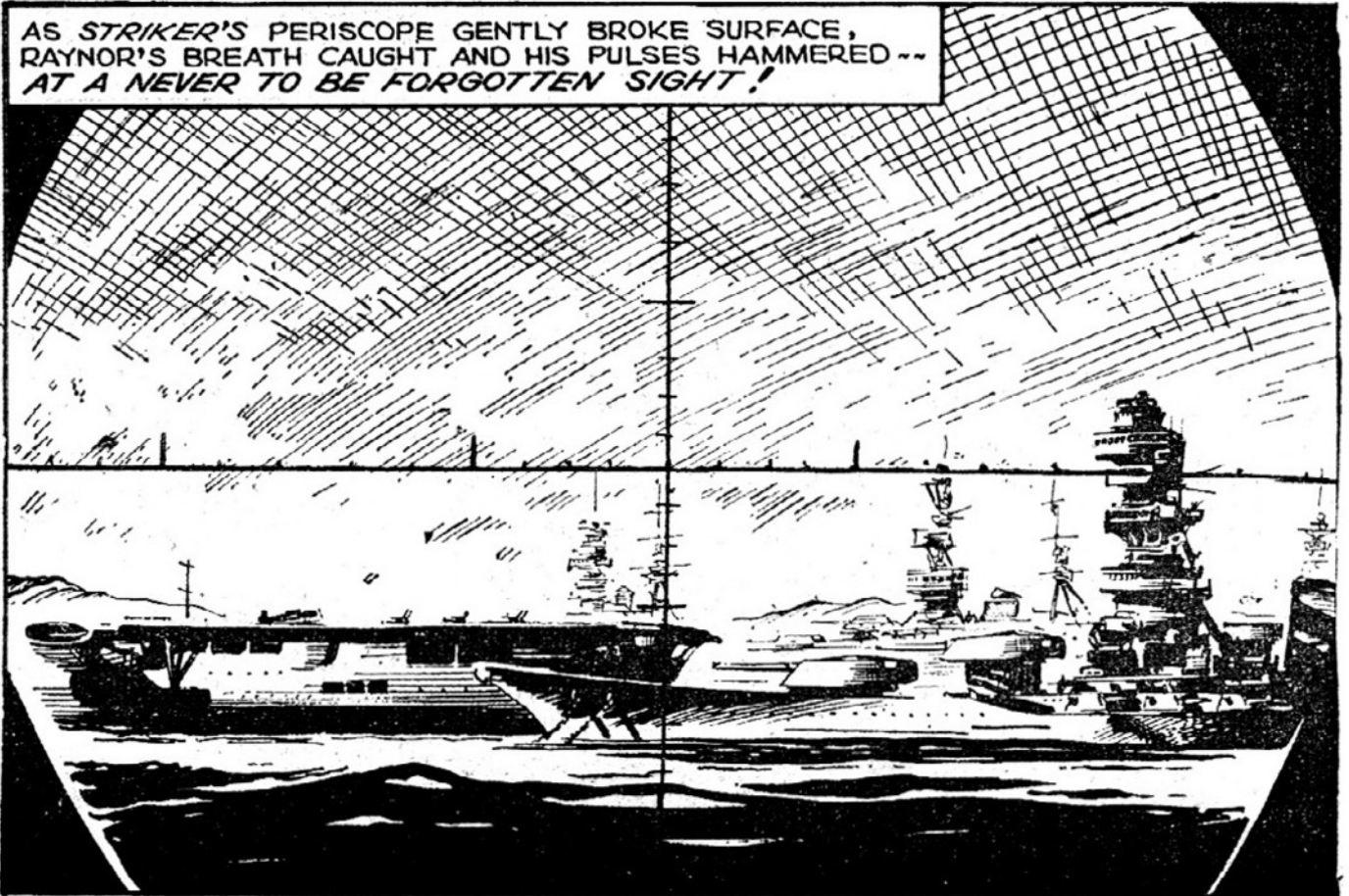
Chapter 3. TARGETS UNLIMITED

SIXTY FEET BELOW, RAYNOR GLANCED AT HIS WATCH FOR THE HUNDREDTH TIME -- AND GAVE A QUICK ORDER. *STRIKER* LIFTED SMOOTHLY ...

FOR'ARD
TORPEDO ROOM--
STAND BY FOR
FIRING!

AYE AYE,
SIR!

AS *STRIKER*'S PERISCOPE GENTLY BROKE SURFACE, RAYNOR'S BREATH CAUGHT AND HIS PULSES HAMMERED -- AT A NEVER TO BE FORGOTTEN SIGHT!

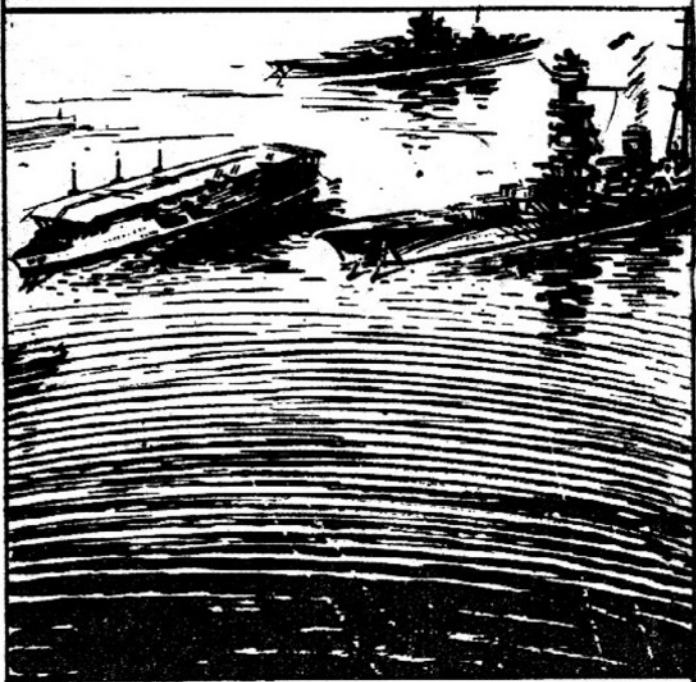


STRIKER'S ENGINES BARELY TURNING OVER, RAYNOR SWUNG HER INTO LINE. HE NODDED -- AND THEN JACK BRICE'S FINGERS STABBED AT THE TORPEDO FIRING BUTTONS!



...AND, PACKED WITH EXPLOSIVE FURY, TWO GLEAMING TIN FISH STREAKED FROM THE FORWARD TUBES!

A FRACTIONAL ALTERATION OF ANGLE -- AND AGAIN TWIN TORPEDOES LANCED HUNGRILY TOWARDS THE UNSUSPECTING JAP SHIPS...

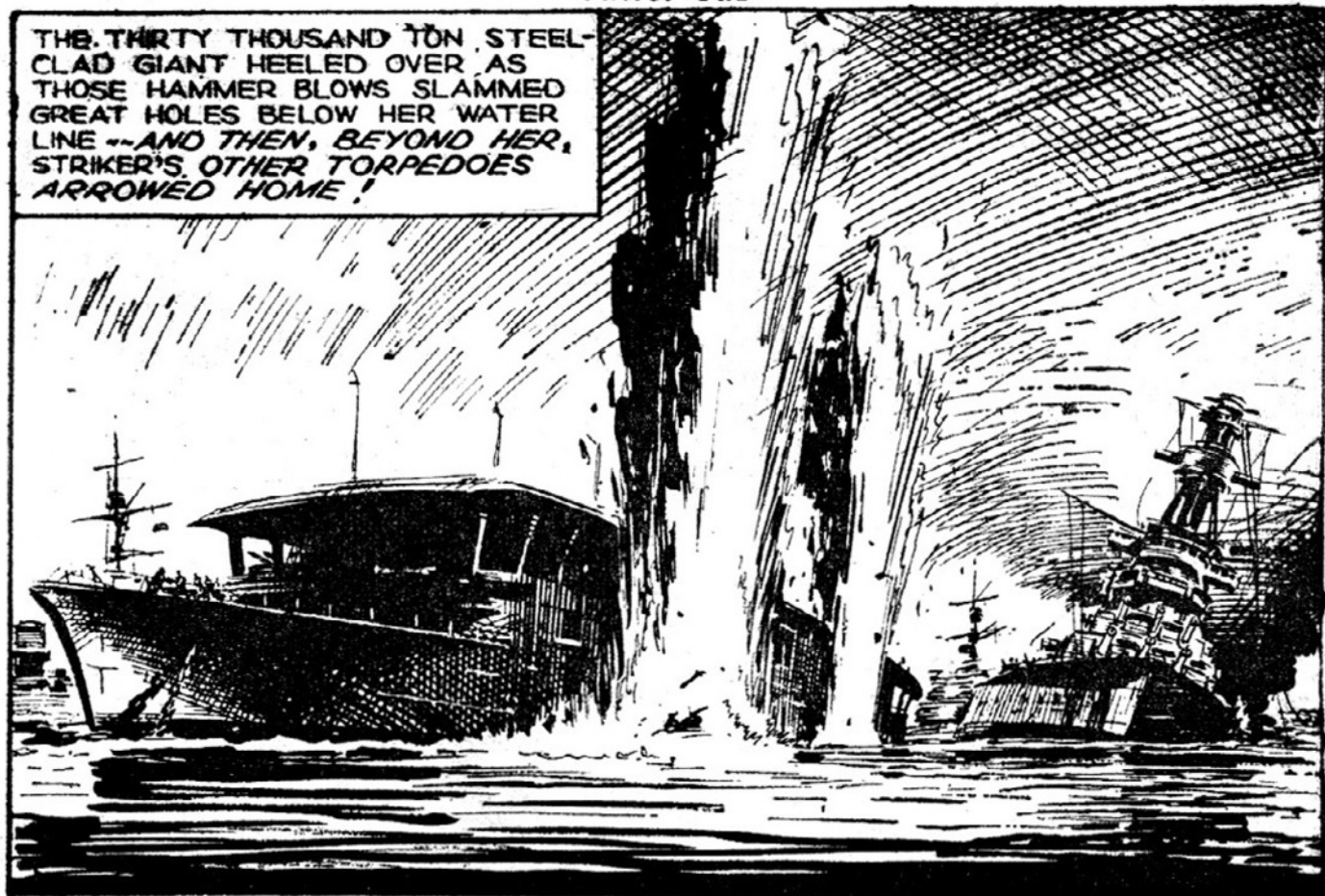


...FOUR UNDERWATER THUNDERBOLTS OF SUDDEN DESTRUCTION THAT COULD TEAR THROUGH ARMOUR PLATE AS IF IT WERE TIN FOIL!

A LOOKOUT IN THE KORAWEI, ONE OF JAPAN'S LATEST BATTLESHIPS, GLANCED IDLY OUT OVER THE HARBOUR, GAPED -- AND SCREAMED A WARNING ... TOO LATE! STRIKER'S FIRST TWO TORPEDOES STRUCK SHATTERINGLY!



THE THIRTY THOUSAND TON STEEL-CLAD GIANT HEELED OVER AS THOSE HAMMER BLOWS SLAMMED GREAT HOLES BELOW HER WATER LINE -- AND THEN, BEYOND HER, STRIKER'S OTHER TORPEDOES ARROWED HOME!



ALL OVER THE HARBOUR, SCREAMING SIRENS PIERCED ABOVE THE THUNDERING EXPLOSIONS ... AND THE JAP EMERGENCY DEFENCE PLAN STUMBLED INTO ACTION ...



TORPEDO ATTACK!
AN ENEMY SUBMARINE MUST HAVE BROKEN INTO THE HARBOUR! ORDER ALL DESTROYERS TO CAST OFF AND SEARCH EVERY INCH OF WATER! BY THE SEVEN SWORDS OF SAMURAI, THE ACCURSED RAIDER MUST NOT ESCAPE!

AT THE JAP COMMANDER'S RADIO ORDER, A SCORE OF DESTROYERS SLIPPED THEIR MOORINGS ... BUT STRIKER WAS READY AGAIN ...



OMINOUS TRACKS OF FROTHING AIR BUBBLES RACED TOWARDS THE HUGE BATTLESHIP NOKARNI ... AND WITH TERRIBLE VIOLENCE, RIPPED A SIXTY FOOT GASH IN HER HULL!



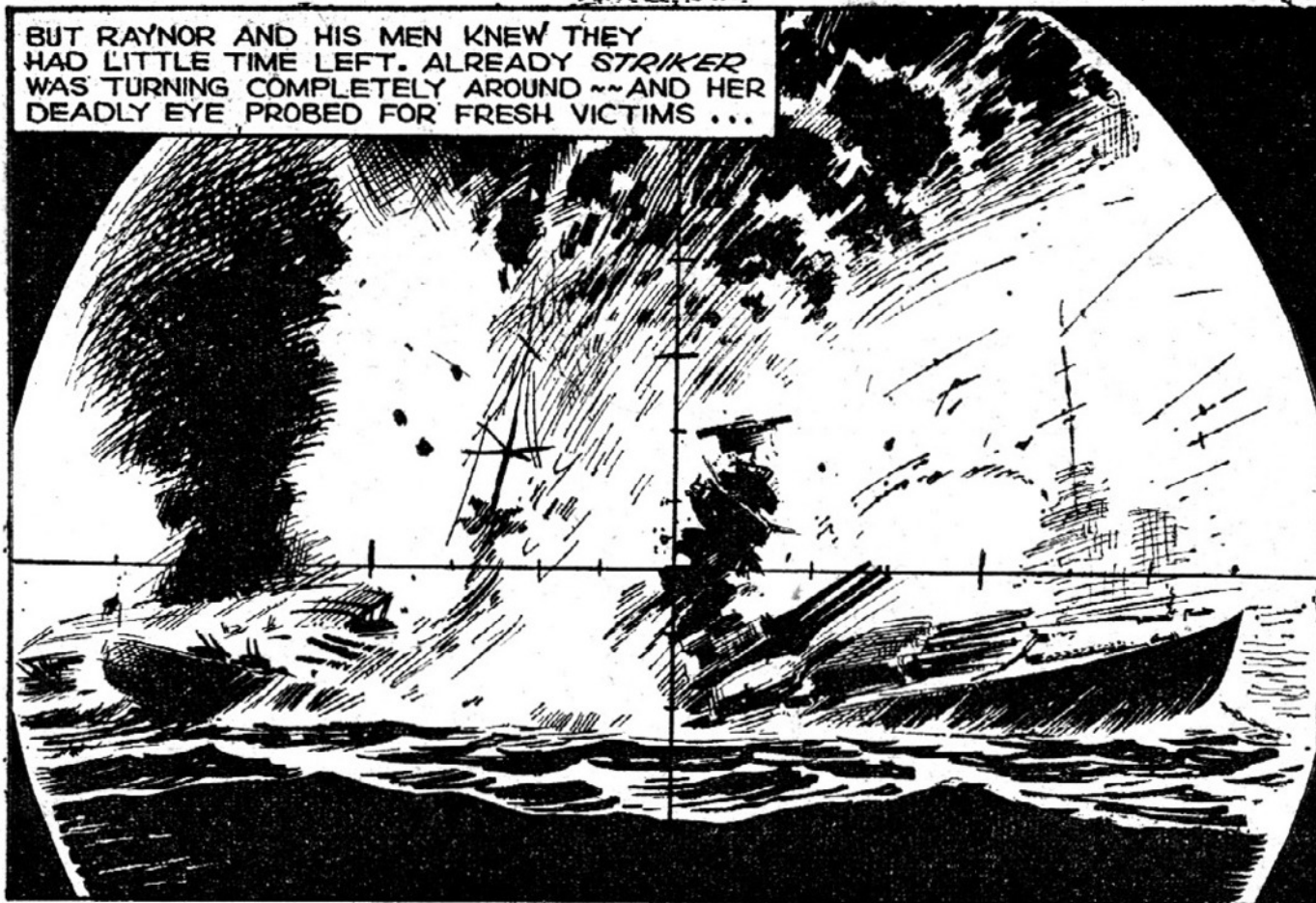
LIKE HUNGRY SHARKS, THE JAP DESTROYERS KNIFED THROUGH THE WATER, DESPERATELY SEARCHING THE DEPTHS WITH DETECTION GEAR ...



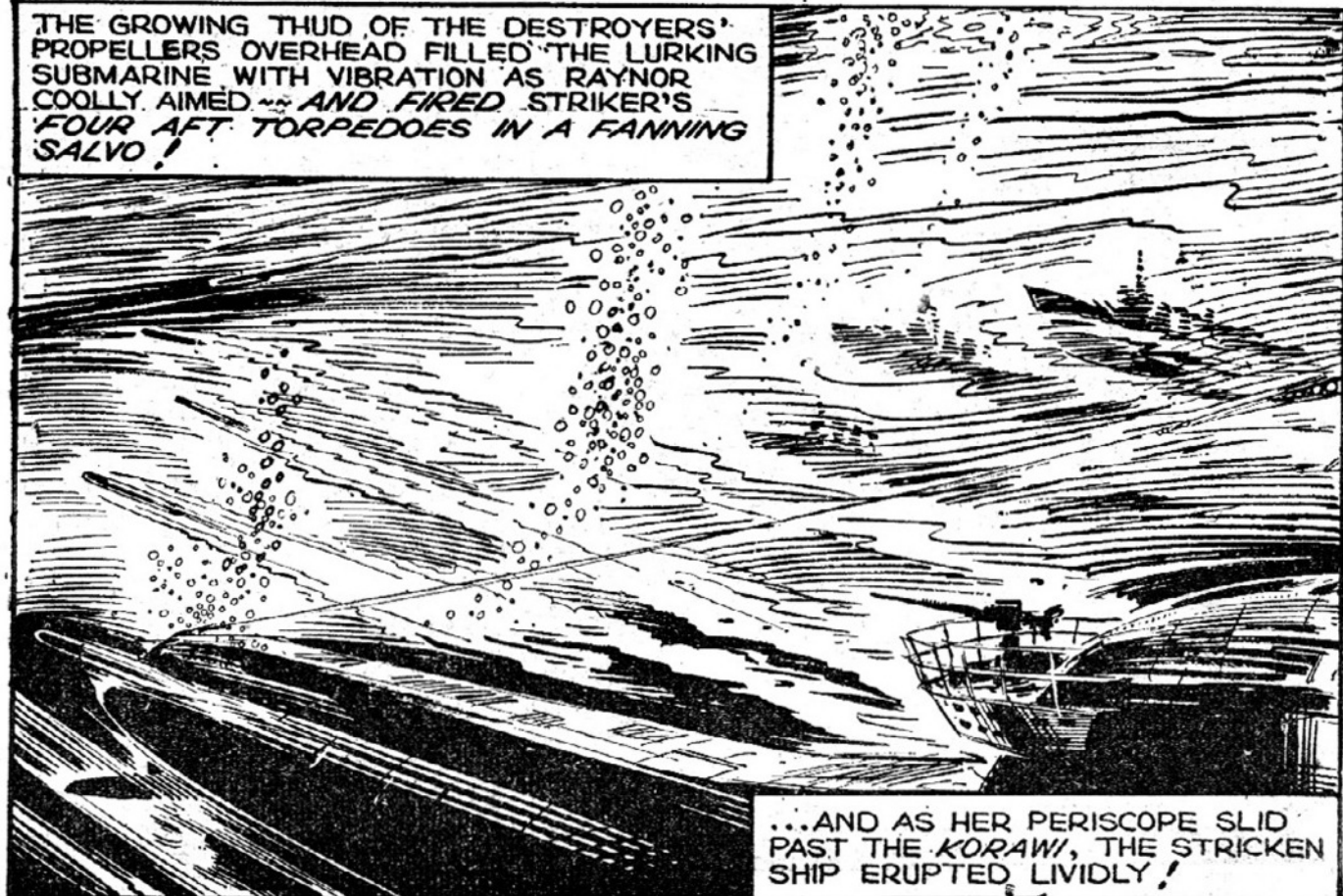
DETECTOR
OPERATOR TO BRIDGE~~
NO ECHO...NO ECHO...
NO ECHO ...

DEPTH CHARGES
SET FOR FIFTY
FEET!

BUT RAYNOR AND HIS MEN KNEW THEY HAD LITTLE TIME LEFT. ALREADY *STRIKER* WAS TURNING COMPLETELY AROUND -- AND HER DEADLY EYE PROBED FOR FRESH VICTIMS ...



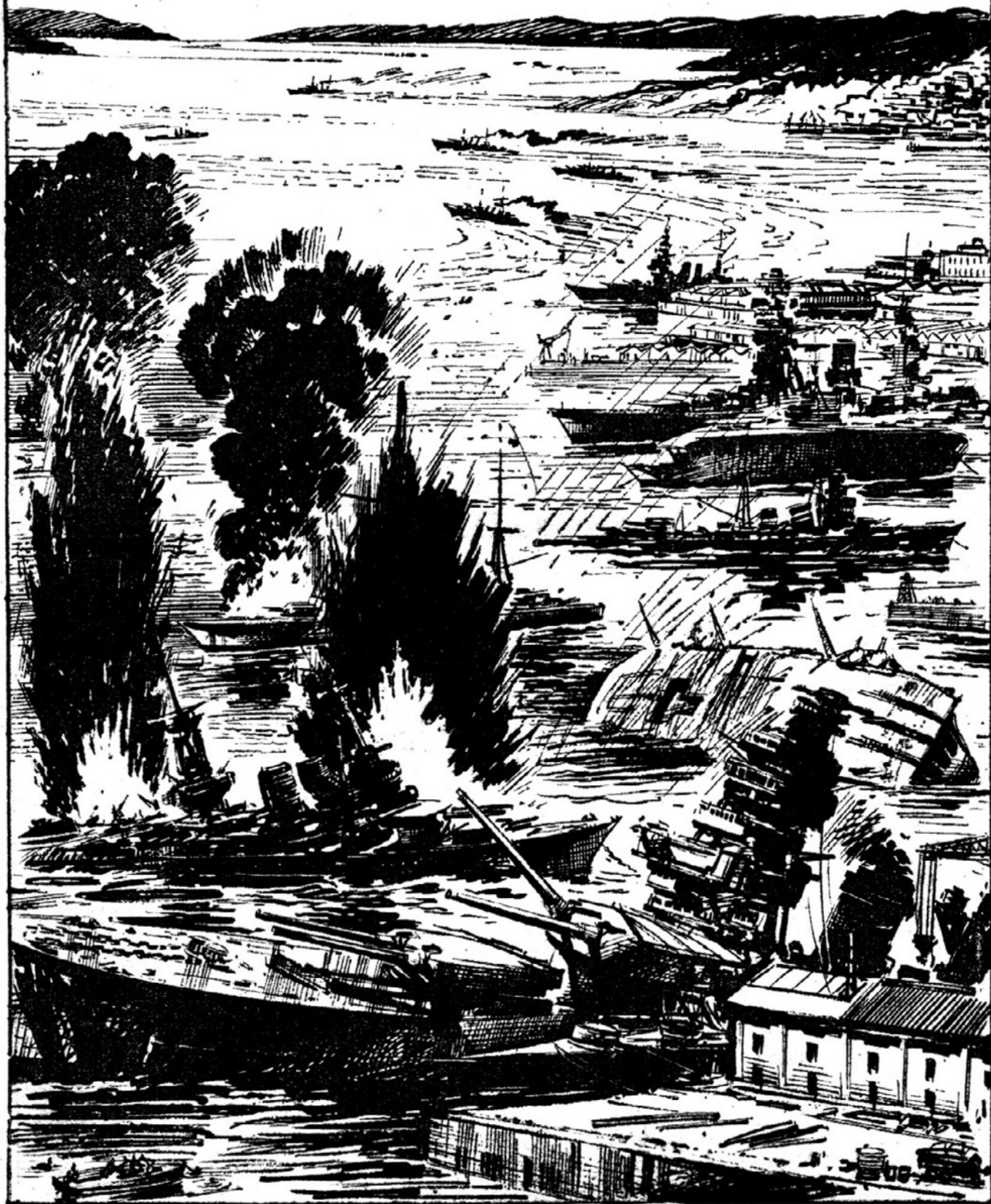
THE GROWING THUD OF THE DESTROYERS' PROPELLERS OVERHEAD FILLED THE LURKING SUBMARINE WITH VIBRATION AS RAYNOR COOLLY AIMED -- AND FIRED *STRIKER*'S FOUR AFT TORPEDOES IN A FANNING SALVO!



...AND AS HER PERISCOPE SLID PAST THE *KORAWI*, THE STRICKEN SHIP ERUPTED LIVIDLY!

Killer Sub

THEN, WITH EVERY TANK FLOODING FAST,
STRIKER SANK TOWARDS THE BOTTOM--YET
EVERY MAN COUNTED THE SECONDS FOR THE
TORPEDO HITS--FOUR...THREE...TWO...ONE...



EACH RUMBLING ROAR WIDENED THE JUBILANT GRINS IN THE PLUNGING SUBMARINE ~ BUT EVEN IN THAT MOMENT OF TRIUMPH, TRAGEDY STRUCK!

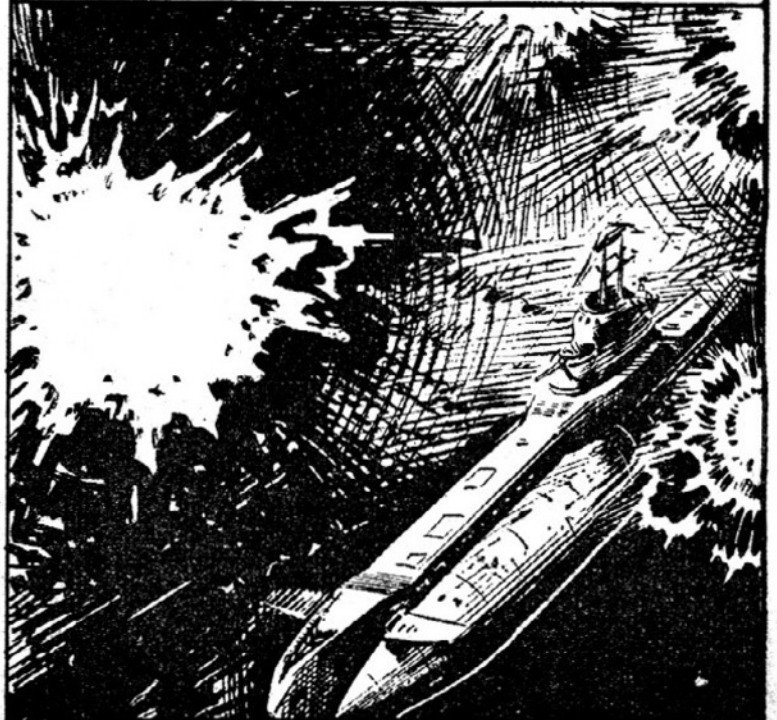
SUBMARINE ECHO STRAIGHT AHEAD, SIR ~ ALMOST ON THE BOTTOM!

PREPARE FOR FULL DEPTH CHARGE ATTACK!



ANOTHER TEN SECONDS AND STRIKER MIGHT HAVE BEEN SAFE, FOR HER SHAPE COULD NOT HAVE GIVEN A SEPARATE ECHO FROM THE BOTTOM. BUT NOW ...

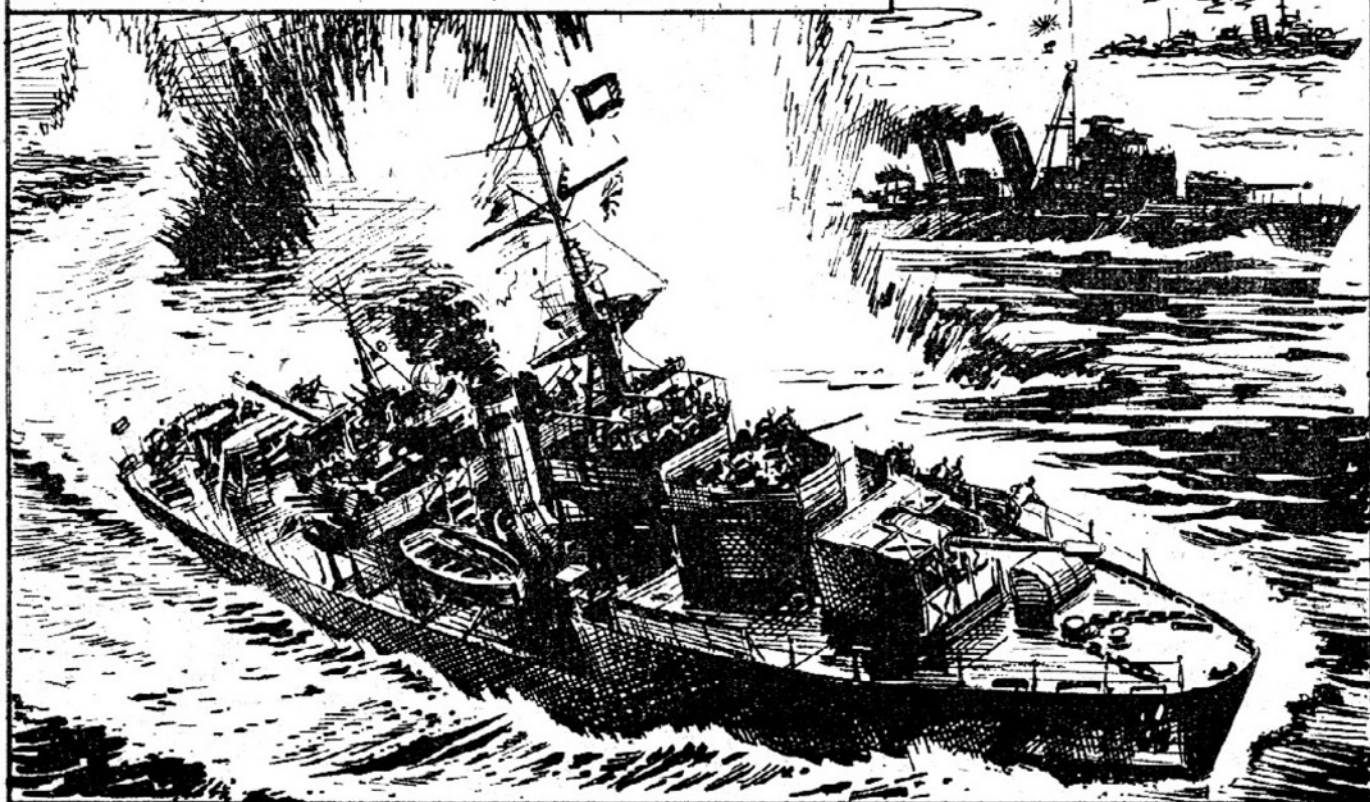
THE BLACK CANISTERS DROPPED IN A SINISTER PATTERN INTO THE WATER ~ DOWN ... DOWN ... THEY SANK



...AND THE DARK DEPTHS WERE SPLIT APART BY VIOLENT SHOCK WAVES!

Killer Sub

THE SHARK PACK SCENTED BLOOD! THE JAP DESTROYERS CLOSED IN ABOVE STRIKER, THEIR EXPLOSIVE ONSLAUGHT CHURNING THE SEA TO A BOILING CAULDRON OF TORTURED WATER ...



THE LONE BRITISH SUBMARINE HAD GOUGED A DEEP WOUND IN THE PRIDE OF THE JAPANESE NAVY. THE HARBOUR WAS A MASS OF BURNING, TWISTED, HALF SUNKEN WRECKS -- BUT THE STRIKER'S OWN PLIGHT WAS LIKELY TO BE LITTLE BETTER!



GLANCING AROUND THE SET-FACES IN THE CONTROL ROOM, RAYNOR READ THE ANSWER IN EVERY EYE... AND KNEW THERE COULD BE NO SURRENDER FOR THESE MEN!

BAD LEAKS IN THE FORWARD TORPEDO ROOM, SIR... AND ENGINE ROOM REPORTS A CRACKED GLAND IN THE PORT PROP SHAFT!

THAT'S IT, THEN. WE'LL LIE HERE SLOWLY FILLING UP... FOR IF WE START THE PUMPS THE JAPS WILL HEAR US STRAIGHTAWAY!

AGAIN DEPTH CHARGES FLUNG STRIKER ALMOST ON HER SIDE. THEN SHE SETTLED BACK... AND TONY MAYNARD SPOKE QUIETLY AND COOLLY...

THERE'S ANOTHER WAY. IT'S A FIFTY TO ONE CHANCE, BUT IT'S BETTER THAN NONE AT ALL. ONE MAN MIGHT SAVE STRIKER!

WHAT DO YOU MEAN? THERE'S NO WAY OUT OF THIS, UNLESS THE JAPS CALL OFF THE ATTACK!

TONY SMILED SLOWLY...

WELL, WE CAN MAKE 'EM STOP! IF ONE SURVIVOR WERE TO REACH THE SURFACE WITH A BIG SLICK OF OIL AND SOME SMALL WRECKAGE, THE NIPS MIGHT RECKON THAT THEY HAD BLOWN US OPEN... AND CALL IT A DAY!

SLOWLY UNDERSTANDING DROVE THE DISBELIEF FROM RAYNOR'S EYES ...

IF I GO OUT OF THE ESCAPE HATCH DRESSED IN THIS YOUNGSTER'S CLOTHES, AND YOU UNLOAD SOME OIL AND RUBBISH FROM A TORPEDO TUBE...

YOU MEAN... YOU... YOU'RE GOING TO DO IT?

BY GEORGE, IT MIGHT JUST WORK~~ BUT WHY MUST IT BE YOU, MAYNARD?

REMEMBER, I'M NOT EVEN IN STRIKER'S CREW! I'M THE ONE MOST EASILY SPARED~~ I HAVEN'T EVEN GOT A USEFUL JOB! NOW, SIR, WE'LL HAVE TO WORK FAST~~ THE JAPS AREN'T WAITING!

ONCE AGAIN, RAYNOR FOUND HIMSELF BEING TOLD WHAT TO DO BY THIS JUNIOR OFFICER~~ AND ONCE AGAIN, HE KNEW THAT MAYNARD WAS RIGHT!

THE PREPARATIONS WERE SWIFTLY MADE, AND DRESSED IN SEAMAN'S CLOTHES, TONY STOOD BY THE FORWARD DAVIS ESCAPE HATCH ...

WHEN THE ATTACK'S OVER, STAY HERE UNTIL TONIGHT. THEN MIKE NUGENT CAN TAKE YOU OUT THROUGH THE DEFENCES~~ HE KNOWS EVERY STEP NOW!

GOOD LUCK, MISTER MAYNARD~~ AND I WOULD HAVE BEEN DARNED PROUD IF YOU HAD BEEN ONE OF MY CREW!

A FIRM HANDSHAKE WAS ALL THAT WAS NEEDED BETWEEN THOSE TWO MEN ~ AND THEN TONY WAS IN THE ESCAPE CHAMBER. AS HE HELD HIS BREATH, IT WAS QUICKLY FLOODED, AND THEN SUDDENLY...



SLAMMING SHOCK WAVES FROM THE DEPTH CHARGES HURLED TONY AWAY FROM STRIKER ~ HALF CONSCIOUS, HE DRIFTED UP SLOWLY, RELEASING THE AIR FROM HIS LUNGS...



A PILE-DRIVING PULSE POUNDED IN TONY'S EAR... LOUDER, LOUDER THUDDER HIS HEART... AND THEN HE KNEW NO MORE... WHILE ON THE SURFACE ABOVE...



DECKS ALMOST AWASH, THE DESTROYER
HEELED OVER IN A SPEEDING TURN ~
AND ANOTHER SHOUT RANG
OUT FROM THE BRIDGE ...

LOOK, CAPTAIN!
A BODY ~ JUST
SURFACED !

STAND BY TO
BRING IT ABOARD!
SLOW BOTH
ENGINES !



HALF A MINUTE LATER, AS ROUGH
HANDS HAULED THE LIMP FORM
FROM THE OILY WATER, TONY
DAZEDLY OPENED HIS ACHING EYES...

THOUGHT ... A
DEPTH CHARGE
EXPLODED ... IN
MY HEAD ... IN
DOWN THERE.

SO, IT WAS
A BRITISH
SUBMARINE ! WELL,
ENGLISHMAN,
SOON, PERHAPS,
YOU WILL WISH
YOU HAD PERISHED
WITH HER !



TONY REMEMBERED LITTLE OF WHAT
FOLLOWED ~ EXCEPT THE ONE LOOK
HE GOT AT THE HARBOUR, LITTERED
WITH BURNING WRECKS ...

WELL DONE, STRIKER !
MOST OF THOSE SHIPS
WILL STILL BE RUSTING
AT THE END OF THE
WAR !

KEEP HIM BELOW
UNDER GUARD !
THERE ARE MANY
QUESTIONS HE
MUST ANSWER !



TONY WAS NOT BELOW FOR LONG ~~~ SOON AFTERWARDS THE DESTROYER TIED UP AT A WHARF AND THE PRISONER WAS FLUNG CONTEMPTUOUSLY ASHORE.

SOON YOUR WHOLE NATION WILL GROVEL AS YOU DO ~~~ AT THE FEET OF THEIR JAPANESE MASTERS!



THEY TOOK TONY TO THE BASE H.Q. ~~~ WHERE A SENIOR NAVAL SECURITY OFFICER WAITED TO QUESTION HIM ...

THE SECURITY OFFICER'S VOICE WAS SOFT AND SMOOTH ~~~ **YET UNDER ITS LIGHTNESS IT WAS AS DEADLY AS A SNAKE'S HISS!**

YOUR NAME AND SHIP?

AND THE REST OF YOUR RAIDING FORCE? HOW MANY OTHER SUBMARINES WERE THERE AND WHAT WERE THEIR OBJECTIVES?

MAYNARD OF THE STRIKER ~~~ I SUPPOSE I'M THE ONLY ONE TO GET OUT OF HER ALIVE?

DON'T ASK ME ABOUT OTHER SHIPS ~~~ NOBODY EVER TOLD ME ABOUT THEM!



FOR AN HOUR THE QUESTIONING WENT ON ~~~ WITH THE INTERROGATOR GRADUALLY LOSING HIS TEMPER AT HIS PRISONER'S IGNORANCE ...

BUT I KEEP TELLING YOU, I DON'T KNOW...
AAAAGH!

QUIET, CUR!

TAKE HIM TO THE CELLS ~~~ I AM CONVINCED HE DOES NOT KNOW ANYTHING!



TONY WAS FLUNG INTO A DARK CELL WHERE THE ONLY LIGHT CAME FROM A TINY GRILLE' HIGH IN ONE OF THE WALLS. THROUGH IT, HE WATCHED THE DAY BECOME NIGHT ...

MUST BE ABOUT MIDNIGHT ~~~ TIME STRIKER WAS WELL ON HER WAY OUT, IF SHE CAN MAKE IT!



AT THAT VERY MOMENT THE CRIPPLED BRITISH SUBMARINE WAS LIMPING SLOWLY ALONG ON ONE ENGINE ~ **OUTSIDE THE HARBOUR DEFENCES!**

STEADY AS SHE IS, QUARTERMASTER!

GREAT WORK, MIKE! YOU GOT US THROUGH!

I DID JUST THE REVERSE OF MAYNARD'S COURSE ~ YOU'VE GOT HIM TO THANK!

WE ALL OWE A GREAT DEAL TO MAYNARD. WITHOUT HIM THE OPERATION WOULD HAVE FAILED DISMALLY ~ AND THE FACT THAT WE ARE ALL STILL ALIVE INSTEAD OF LYING DEAD ON THE BOTTOM OF YOSHIKANA HARBOUR IS **DUE TO THE COURAGE AND SELF-SACRIFICE OF A VERY GALLANT GENTLEMAN!**

Chapter 4.

BREAKING POINT

THE NEXT MORNING, ARMED GUARDS ESCORTED TONY FROM HIS TINY CELL. HE GATHERED THAT THEY WERE TAKING HIM TO A P.O.W. CAMP INLAND. THERE WERE OTHER BRITISH NAVAL PRISONERS AT THE WAITING TRUCK AND SUDDENLY ...



TONY TWISTED HIS HEAD AWAY -- BUT IT WAS TOO LATE. THE NAVAL OFFICER HAD RECOGNISED HIM ...

JAP BOMBERS GOT MY SHIP OFF THE SOLOMONS A WEEK AGO -- WE'RE THE ONLY SURVIVORS! BUT HOW IN HEAVEN'S NAME DID THEY NAB YOU?



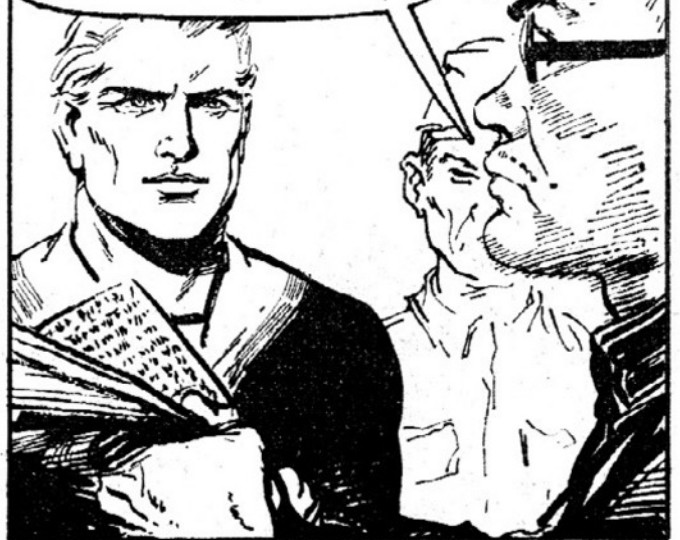
LITTLE REALISING THE PERIL HE HAD CAUSED, THE CAPTIVE LIEUTENANT WAS HUSTLED AWAY AND AGAIN TONY WAS BAYONET PRODDED INTO THE INTERROGATION ROOM. THERE THE JAP ESCORT COMMANDER MADE HIS REPORT...



YOU HAVE DONE WELL, PETTY OFFICER. NOW WE WILL TRY TO TRACE MAYNARD IN OUR FILES OF BRITISH NAVAL OFFICERS!

A GLEAM OF GRUDGING ADMIRATION FOR THE JAPS' EFFICIENCY SHOWED IN TONY'S EYES WHEN, TWENTY MINUTES LATER, A SENIOR SECURITY CLERK PRODUCED A SLIM FILE...

MOST INTERESTING! **MAYNARD - ANTHONY CLIVE - LIEUTENANT ROYAL NAVY - LAST POSTED TO NAVAL INTELLIGENCE AT BRITISH PACIFIC FLEET H.Q. IN SYDNEY!** IT SEEMS THAT YOU WOULD KNOW THE ANSWERS TO MANY QUESTIONS, LIEUTENANT!



YOU WILL BE WISE TO -- CO-OPERATE WITH US. IT WILL SAVE YOU A LOT OF -- AH -- DISCOMFORT, AND US A LOT OF TIME ... **FOR YOU WILL TALK IN THE END!**

MAYBE -- BUT MY ANSWER WILL BE THE SAME AS IT IS NOW... I WILL NOT CO-OPERATE WITH YOU!



Killer Sub

THE SECURITY OFFICER'S HAND CHOPPED VICIOUSLY ACROSS TONY'S FACE!

DOG! IT WILL BE MY PLEASURE TO LOOSEN YOUR TONGUE!

THEN BEGAN A NIGHTMARE OF ENDURANCE FOR TONY MAYNARD. FOR HOUR AFTER HOUR THE COLDLY PERSISTENT VOICES OF THE INTERROGATORS CREPT INTO HIS EARS -- THEN, STILL OBSTINATELY SILENT, HE WAS CONFINED DEEP BELOW THE H.Q. BUILDINGS IN A CELL SO SMALL HE COULD ONLY JUST KNEEL IN IT!

FOR DAYS THE INCREDIBLE ROUTINE WENT ON -- QUESTIONS... QUESTIONS... QUESTIONS... THEN THE MUSCLE-RACKING TORTURE OF THAT TINY CELL FOR ANOTHER FEW HOURS. THEN IT BEGAN ALL OVER AGAIN...

FOR THREE AGONY-PACKED WEEKS TONY MAYNARD REMAINED SILENT, HIS OWN WILL UNYIELDING FOR A SINGLE SECOND. YET HE WAS ONLY A SHADOW OF THE FORMER MAN AS HE STUMBLED INTO THE SECURITY OFFICE ONCE AGAIN...

AH, LIEUTENANT MAYNARD! ALMOST A PITY THAT THIS IS THE LAST TIME YOU WILL BE MY --- GUEST!

WHAT'S THE CRAFTY LITTLE CROW UP TO NOW?





TONY GLANCED OUT OF THE WINDOW AT THE
HARBOUR -- AND HE CAUGHT HIS BREATH...



OUR AGENTS REPORT THAT THE MAIN BRITISH FLEET WILL LEAVE SYDNEY IN TEN DAYS' TIME TO JOIN THE AMERICANS. A SUBMARINE PATROLLING THE HARBOUR MOUTH WILL RADIO THE SHIPS' COURSE TO OUR FORCE ~~ **AND WE STRIKE! THE BRITISH FLEET WILL BE ANNIHILATED! THEN UNOPPOSED, OUR INVASION FORCE WILL SAIL TO CONQUER AUSTRALIA!**



THE GUARDS STARTED TO DRAG TONY AWAY ~~ BUT HE SUDDENLY TORE HIS ARMS FREE, **AND FLUNG HIMSELF AT THE JAP OFFICER'S FEET!**

DON'T -- DON'T SHOOT ME! I'LL DO WHATEVER YOU SAY -- TELL YOU ANYTHING ~~ **BUT DON'T KILL ME!**

I THOUGHT THAT WOULD FINALLY BREAK YOU! AND PERHAPS THERE IS A WAY YOU CAN EARN YOUR LIFE ~~ **BY BETRAYING YOUR OWN NAVY!**



THE JAPANESE OFFICER SNEERED CONTEMPTUOUSLY DOWN AT TONY ...

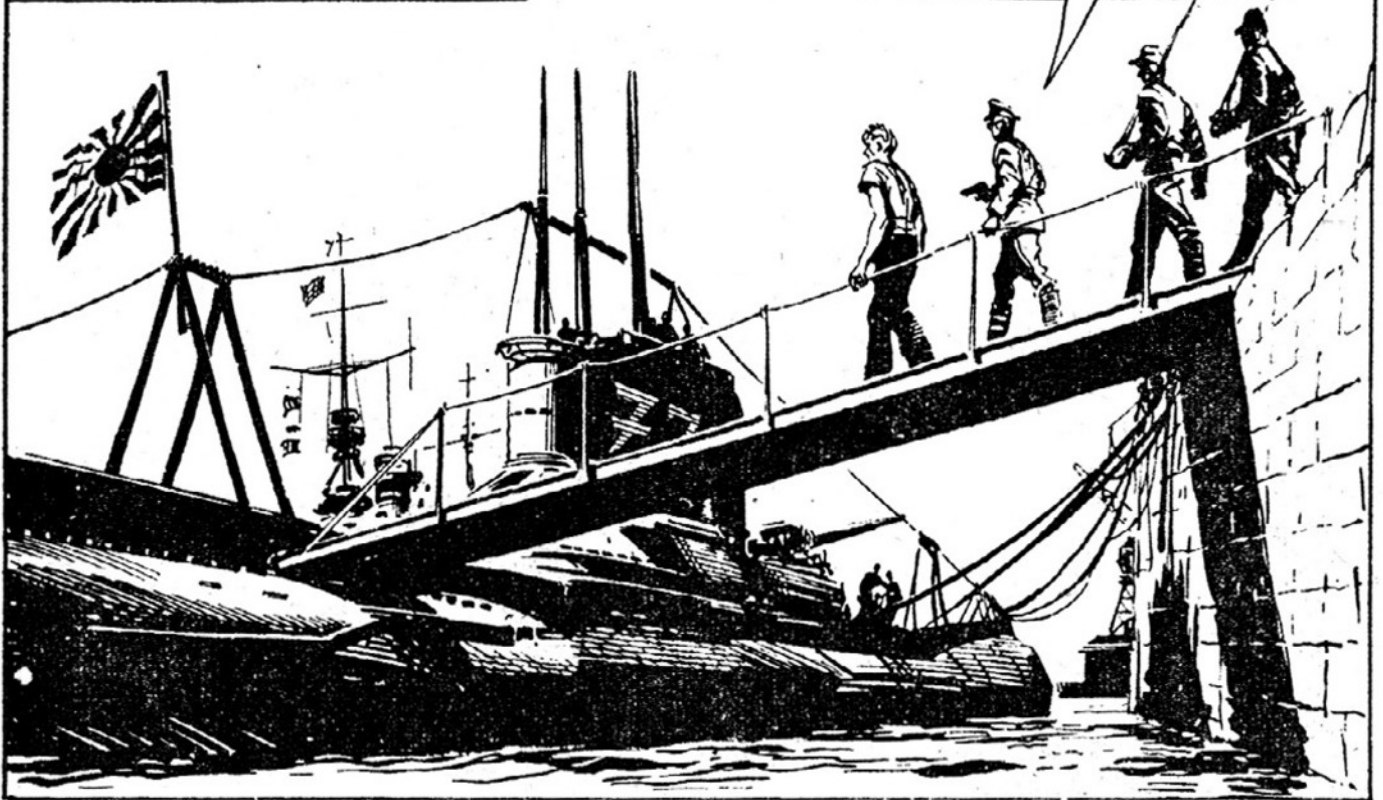
OUR SUBMARINE WILL NEED GUIDING CLOSE TO THE HARBOUR AT NIGHT. YOU KNOW THE CURRENTS AND THE CHANNELS IT MUST USE ~~ **SO YOU WILL PILOT IT IN!**

YES, YES -- I KNOW THE EXACT COURSE THROUGH THE MINES AND ROCK BARRIERS!



THAT AFTERNOON, TONY WAS TAKEN TO A JAP SUBMARINE TIED UP AT ONE OF THE QUAYS ...

YOU WILL BE WATCHED CLOSELY AND AT THE FIRST SIGN OF TREACHERY, YOU WILL DIE WHERE YOU STAND!



BELOW DECKS THEY PUT HIM IN A CRAMPED STORES CUBICLE ~ WITH AN ALERT GUARD A YARD AWAY ...

NOW, MY ORDERS ARE TO SAIL AT ONCE!



AND THE IMPERIAL BATTLE FLEET WILL FOLLOW YOU IN TWO DAYS!

Killer Sub

FOR NINE DAYS AFTER SHE SLIPPED OUT OF YOSHIKANA, THE JAP SUBMARINE SPED SOUTHWARDS UNDER FULL POWER ...

THE NINTH DAY -- WE MUST BE GETTING CLOSE TO THE APPROACH RUN NOW!

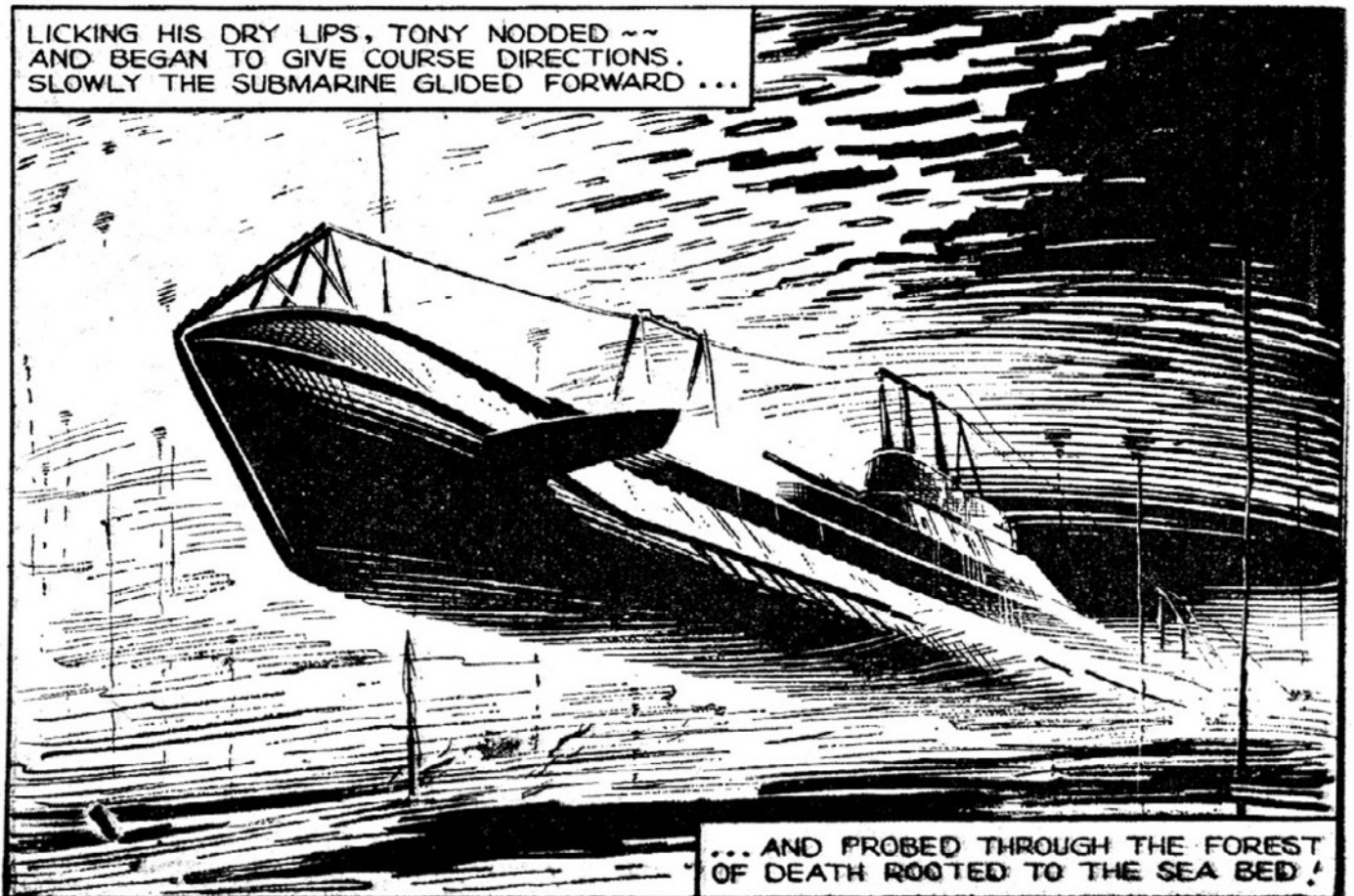


THAT DAY, TONY WAS DRAGGED BEFORE THE COMMANDER ...

WE ARE HERE, ENGLISHMAN, THREE MILES NORTH OF THE HARBOUR MOUTH. YOU WILL TAKE US THROUGH THE MINEFIELD AND CLOSE ENOUGH TO SEE SHIPS LEAVING IT IN DARKNESS! **REMEMBER, ONE MISTAKE WILL BE YOUR LAST!**



LICKING HIS DRY LIPS, TONY NODDED -- AND BEGAN TO GIVE COURSE DIRECTIONS. SLOWLY THE SUBMARINE GLIDED FORWARD ...



... AND PROBED THROUGH THE FOREST OF DEATH ROOTED TO THE SEA BED!

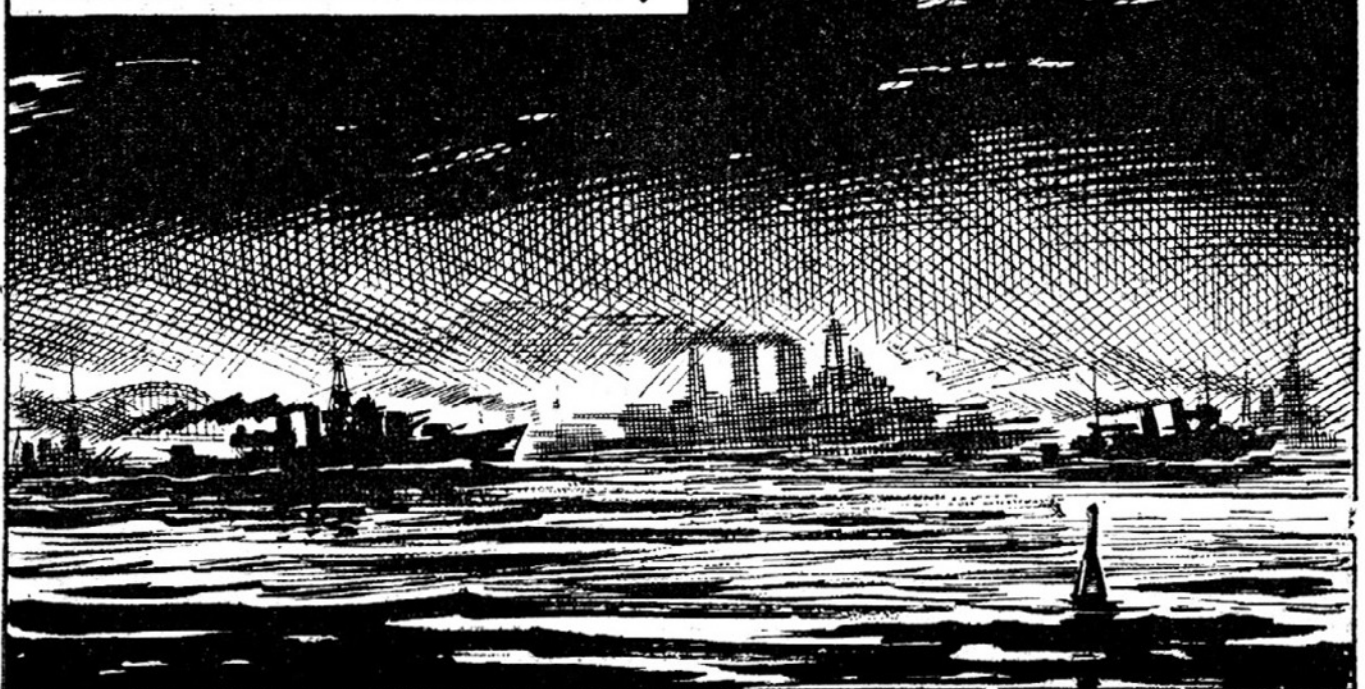
THE ENGLISHMAN'S INSTRUCTIONS WERE OBEYED IMPLICITLY... AND THE UNDERWATER CRAFT CREPT SAFELY THROUGH THE MINE BELT. NOW ONLY ROCKS LAY AHEAD...



IF WE SLIP THROUGH THIS GAP AND SHELTER BEHIND IT, YOU'LL BE ABLE TO SEE THE ENTRANCE CLEARLY, AND YOU'LL BE PROTECTED FROM THE CURRENTS AS WELL!

GOOD ~~ IT WILL BE PERFECT!

AS SILENT AS A TOMB, THE SUBMARINE LAY ON THE BOTTOM INSIDE THE ROCKS UNTIL, WITH TIMETABLE PRECISION, THE COMMANDER ORDERED THE PERISCOPE UP... AND THROUGH THE GLOOM HE SAW THEM... **A FAST-MOVING BATTLE SQUADRON OF BRITAIN'S FINEST WARSHIPS!**





THE RADIO MORSE KEY, CLICKED RAPIDLY AS THE PERISCOPE WAS TURNED, SCANNING THE DARKNESS-SHROUDED SEA ABOVE. **THEN SUDDENLY...**

A BRITISH DESTROYER FLOTILLA! HEADING STRAIGHT TOWARDS US! IF THEY HAVE PICKED UP OUR RADIO, THEY'LL ATTACK! DOWN PERISCOPE!



THE SECOND DESTROYER SCREEN, RIGHT ON TIME! **JUST AS I REMEMBERED SEEING IN THE ADMIRAL'S PLANS TWO MONTHS AGO!**

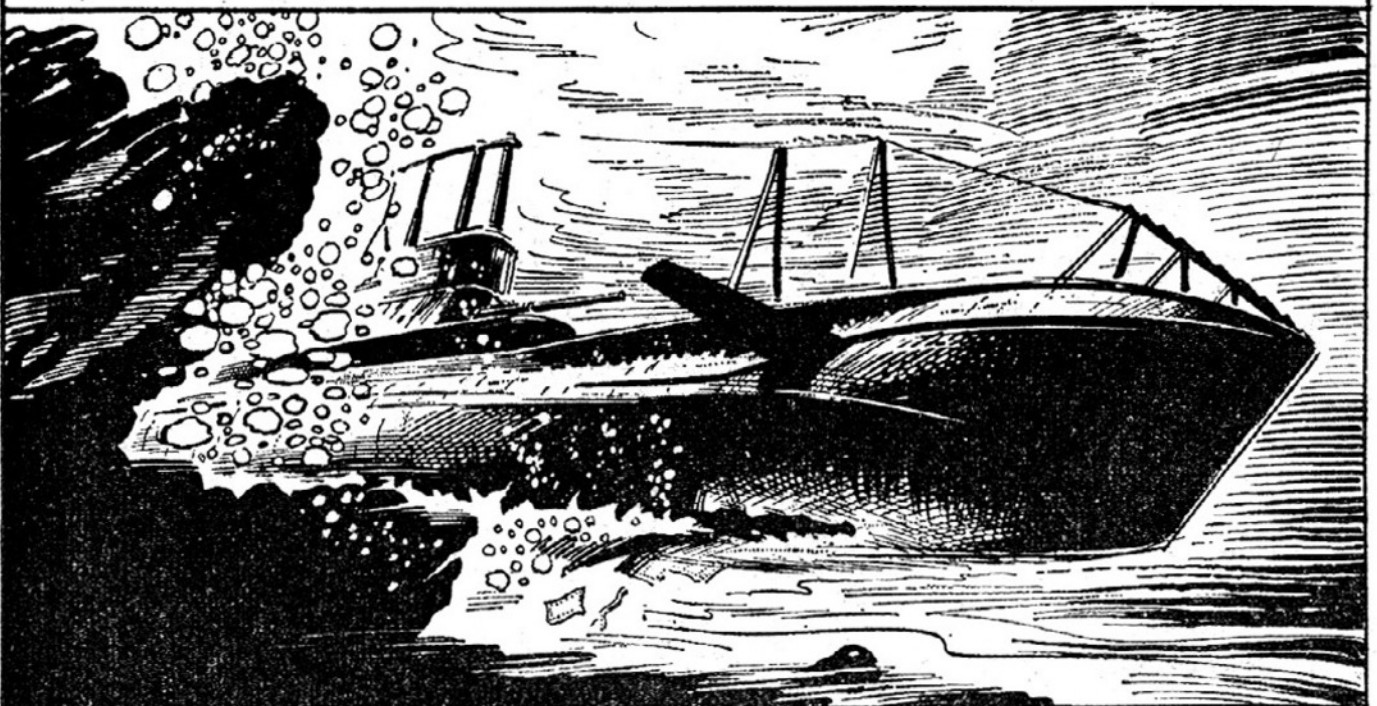
IF THE DESTROYERS WERE PREPARING FOR A DEPTH CHARGE ATTACK, THE JAP COMMANDER WANTED TO GET OUT FAST! HE SNARLED AT TONY...



THEY WILL PASS OVER THIS SPOT IN THREE MINUTES -- TAKE US OUT THROUGH THE ROCK BARRIER IMMEDIATELY!

COURSE SIX EIGHT, FULL SPEED BOTH MOTORS!

THERE SEEMED NOTHING WRONG WITH THAT ORDER -- BUT THE JAPS HAD FORGOTTEN ONE THING -- AS TONY HAD HOPED! DURING THAT HOUR, THE TIDE HAD CHANGED -- AND AS THE SUB RACED INTO THE GAP...



... THE EIGHT KNOT CURRENT FLUNG HER CRUSHINGLY AGAINST THE BLACK-FANGED, HULL-RIPPING ROCKS!

ONLY TONY MAYNARD WAS READY FOR THE PANIC-STRICKEN CHAOS WHICH FOLLOWED ...

YOUR JOB'S OVER, CHUM!



FOR A SPLIT-SECOND, THE SUBMARINE WAS IMPALED ON THE ROCKS -- THEN, AS HUNDREDS OF TONS OF SEETHING WATER SURGED INTO HER, SHE LURCHED VIOLENTLY ...



GREAT BUBBLES OF AIR WERE BELCHING UP OUT OF THE HOLES IN THE HULL -- AND WITH ONE OF THEM WENT THE BRITISH OFFICER !



ON THE SURFACE ABOVE, H.M.S. JAVELIN, LEADING THE NINTH DESTROYER FLOTILLA, WAS JUST ALTERING COURSE TO BYPASS THE ROCKS -- WHEN A FOC'SLE HAND YELLED, HIS VOICE HIGH PITCHED WITH URGENCY...



Killer Sub

CLOSELY GUARDED BY HER SISTER SHIPS, JAVELIN DRIFTED UP TO THE SURVIVORS -- AND BEGAN TO HAUL THEM ABOARD ...



COME ON, MATE --
COR STONE THE
CROWS, HE'S
ONE OF OUR
BLOKES!

DARNED
QUEER KETTLE
OF FISH ...
THEY LOOK
LIKE A JAP
SUB CREW!

I'M A BRITISH
OFFICER -- GET ME
TO YOUR COMMANDER
AT ONCE -- IT'S VITAL!

WITHIN SECONDS, TONY WAS IDENTIFYING HIMSELF ON THE BRIDGE -- IN BRIEF, URGENT WORDS HE EXPLAINED THE JAPANESE PLAN TO THE DESTROYER'S CAPTAIN ...



I HAD TO PLAY THE JAP'S
GAME, SIR, WAITING FOR
ONE SLIM CHANCE ...
AND I GOT IT!

RADIO THE FLEET FLAGSHIP
AT ONCE REPORTING THE
ENEMY'S INTENTION -- AND THAT
WE ARE SETTING COURSE TO
INTERCEPT THE JAPS!

THEN ALDIS LAMPS FLICKERED ALONG THE LINE OF TEN SLENDER SEA GREYHOUNDS ~ AND THEIR THIN STEEL HULLS TREMBLED AS THE FULL POWER OF THEIR MIGHTY TURBINES WAS UNLEASHED. AT THIRTY-FIVE KNOTS THEY KNIFED THROUGH THE DARK WATERS ...

IF WE HAVE ANTICIPATED THE ENEMY FLEET'S COURSE CORRECTLY, WE SHOULD FIND 'EM AT DAWN ~ IN JUST THREE HOURS!

WELL, SIR, YOU'VE GOT THE BEST WEAPON ON YOUR SIDE ~ SURPRISE!



THROUGH THOSE LONG HOURS THE BRITISH CREWS SAT READY AT THEIR BATTLE STATIONS UNTIL THE EASTERN SKY SLOWLY LIGHTENED ...

FORWARD LOOKOUT REPORTING SHIPS BEARING GREEN TWO FIVE...

SIGNAL TO FLOTILLA ~ TORPEDO ATTACK FROM LINE ABREAST! WE ARE GOING STRAIGHT IN!



WITH PERFECT PRECISION THE DESTROYERS SWUNG INTO POSITION ON JAVELIN'S PORT BEAM. AND FROM FIVE MILES AWAY THE JAPANESE SAW THEM ...

AN ENEMY DESTROYER FORCE DEPLOYING FOR ATTACK! HOW THEY HAVE FOUND US IS A MYSTERY ~ BUT THEY MUST BE WIPE OUT! OPEN FIRE WITH MAIN ARMAMENT!



FLASHES ERUPTED ALONG
THE LINE OF JAP WARSHIPS.
A MINUTE LATER, WITH THE
SCREAMING OF A THOUSAND
EXPRESS TRAINS, THE
FIRST BROADSIDE LANDED...

SIX THOUSAND
YARDS, SIR!

WE'LL HAVE TO
TAKE AT LEAST ONE
MORE SALVO BEFORE
WE ARE IN EFFECTIVE
RANGE!



UNFLINCHING, THE ATTACKERS RACED ON THROUGH THE JAPS' FIRE. THE ENEMY DESTROYER SCREEN WAS TURNING TO MEET THEM **WHEN THE SECOND BROADSIDE LANDED...**



ON JAVELIN'S BRIDGE, TONY MAYNARD STOOD BRACED BESIDE THE CAPTAIN, WAITING FOR THE ORDER ...



Killer Sub

AS ONE, THE EIGHT SURVIVING ATTACKERS HEELED SHARPLY OVER AND FROM AMIDSHIPS EACH LAUNCHED FOUR STREAMLINED MISSILES...



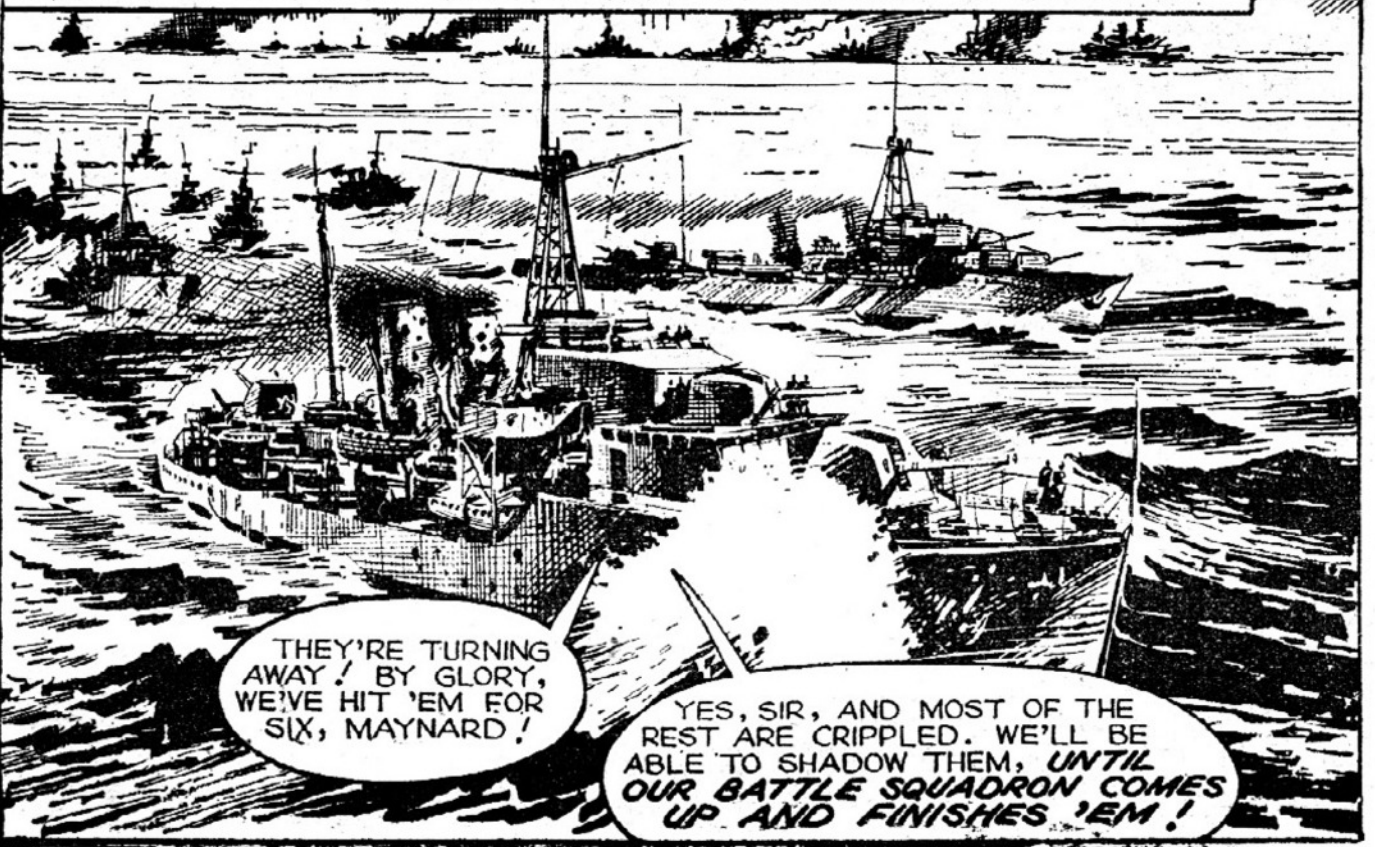
THE BRITISH FLOTILLA SWUNG AWAY AND THE JAP DESTROYER SCREEN LEAPED IN PURSUIT ~ AND TWO OF THEM WERE HIT!



DESPERATELY, THE MASSIVE JAPANESE CAPITAL SHIPS TRIED TO MANOEUVRE AWAY FROM THE APPROACHING TORPEDOES--
BUT MANY FAILED!



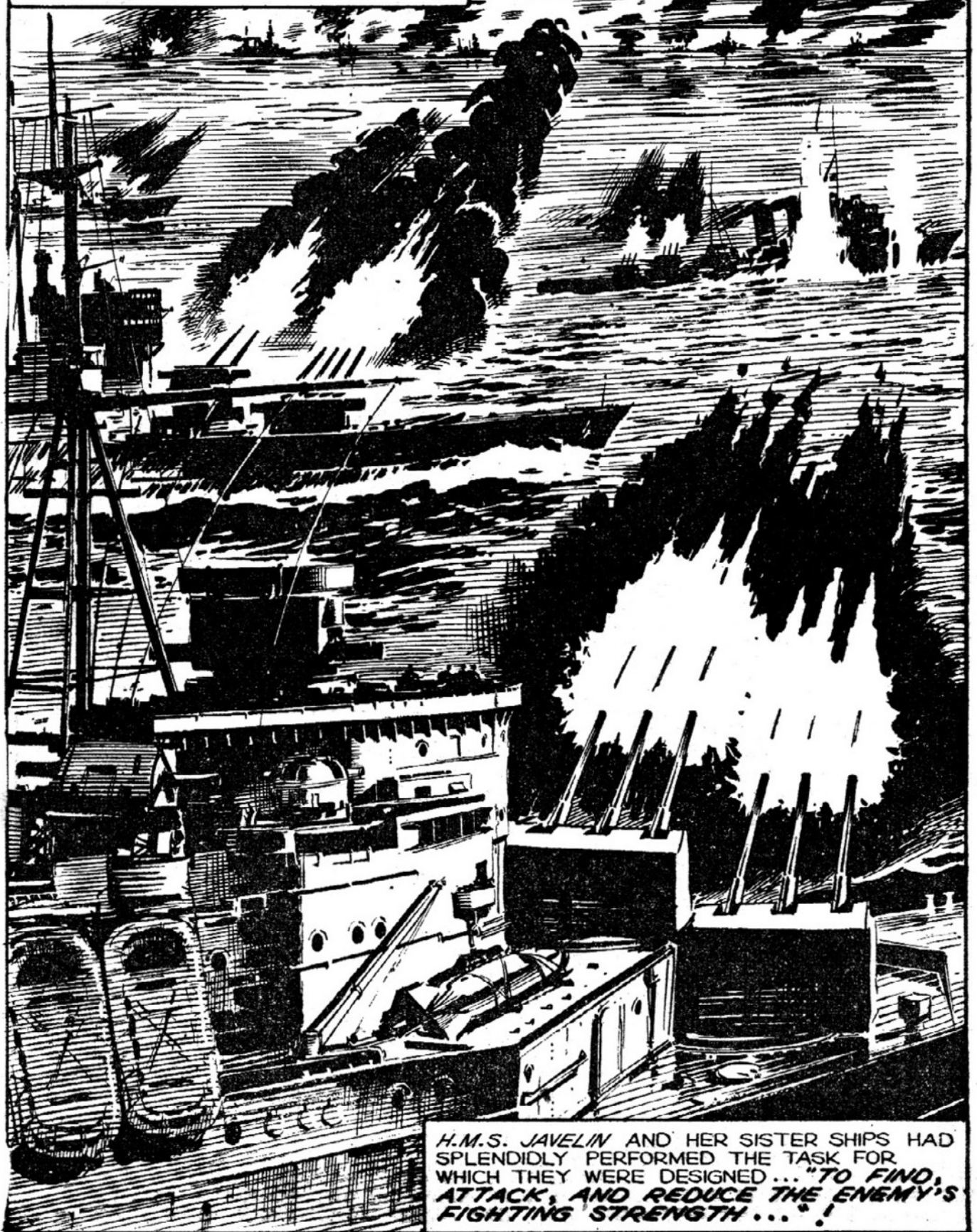
WITH THAT ONE DEATH-DEFYING, MAGNIFICENT ATTACK, THE DESTROYERS HAD RIPPED THE GREAT BATTLE FLEET'S FORMATION TO SHREDS ...



THEY'RE TURNING AWAY! BY GLORY, WE'VE HIT 'EM FOR SIX, MAYNARD!

YES, SIR, AND MOST OF THE REST ARE CRIPPLED. WE'LL BE ABLE TO SHADOW THEM, UNTIL OUR BATTLE SQUADRON COMES UP AND FINISHES 'EM!

AND SO IT WAS THAT THREE HOURS LATER THE MAIN BRITISH FORCE CAME OVER THE HORIZON -- **BEHIND A HUNDRED BLAZING GUNS!**



H.M.S. JAVELIN AND HER SISTER SHIPS HAD SPLENDIDLY PERFORMED THE TASK FOR WHICH THEY WERE DESIGNED... "TO FIND, ATTACK, AND REDUCE THE ENEMY'S FIGHTING STRENGTH..."

THE STORY OF THE BATTLE WHICH FOLLOWED HAS ITS PLACE IN HISTORY -- SUFFICE TO SAY THAT WHEN NIGHT FELL FEW JAPANESE SHIPS HAD ESCAPED, UNSCATHED.



A DEFEAT LIKE THIS MAY WELL TURN THE TIDE OF SEA POWER IN THE PACIFIC. YOU'VE DONE A REMARKABLE JOB, TONY!

SOON AFTER DAWN THE NEXT DAY, AS *H.M.S. JAVELIN* LED THE LINE OF BATTERED DESTROYERS INTO SYDNEY HARBOUR, A BRITISH SUBMARINE CAME SLIDING TOWARDS HER... IT WAS *H.M.S. STRIKER*!



GOOD GRIEF... LOOK AT JAVELIN'S BRIDGE... IT'S TONY MAYNARD!

BY THUNDER, NUMBER ONE, YOU'RE RIGHT! CALL THE MEN TO ATTENTION!

AND AS THE NEWLY REPAIRED *STRIKER* SLID PAST *JAVELIN*, THE LONE, WEARY AND HAGGARD FIGURE OF TONY MAYNARD STIFFENED TO ATTENTION, HIS HAND WHIPPING UP TO SALUTE ...



... IT WAS A SILENT TRIBUTE -- A GREETING AND A FAREWELL BETWEEN BRAVE MEN WHOSE FIGHTING SPIRIT WOULD NEVER BE DAUNTED, AND WHO WERE JOINED IN ONE COMMON CAUSE -- **THE FINAL, CRUSHING DEFEAT OF BRITAIN'S ENEMIES!**

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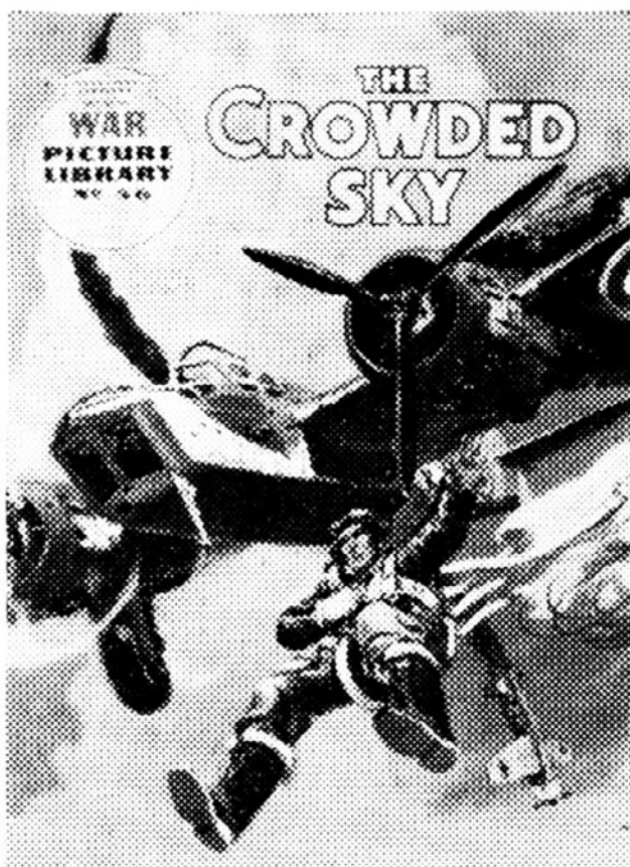
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